JOHN GOSZNER'S TREASURY



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John Goszner's Treasury

CONTAINING

BIBLE MEDITATIONS FOR EACH DAY IN THE YEAR

WITH

Devotional Songs to the Furtherance of Family Prayer and Piety

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THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Rev. 22: 20. These are they which have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb —— that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Rev. 7: 14; 22: 14. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Rev. 3: 20.

There is a threefold coming of Christ, a threefold Advent. He is come, He comes, and He will come; thus "saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1: 8). By His incarnation and birth He came to the world and dwelt here for men's sake. He comes daily to men, through faith and regeneration of the inner man, and dwells and lives in the heart (Rev. 3: 20; John 14: 23). On the day of His manifestation He will come against the world and the unbelivers to judge and to punish them, and to reward the pious. Christ's first advent will not avail us, and the third advent will be terrible, if we do not make use of His second advent to us. If He come not *into us,* His coming *for us* will not avail us, and at last He will come *against* us. All depends, therefore, upon His advent into us, as the apostle Paul says, "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13: 5).

Since His third advent seems to be very near at hand, and we know not how soon and suddenly it will fall upon the earth, inasmuch as He will come as "a thief in the night," we should above all things prepare for His advent into our hearts. Who shall stand against His wrath if he have not Christ dwelling in him? No man will be able to endure the last trials, the great hour of temptation, unless he has received Christ in his heart and is kept by Him. For the wrath of God will be unendurable to all who are without God and without Christ. Christ must dwell in your heart—not on

your tongue and in your head only; else He will not assist you at His judgment seat. He who has not Christ in Him, will, as a shell without the kernel, be found wanting and cast into the fire. He in whom Christ does not dwell, cannot say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" without calling for the flames of His fire that they consume him. O Lord Jesus, come first into our hearts, that with joy we may see Thee also when Thou comest to judgment and retribution.

Arise, the Kingdom is at hand,
The King is drawing nigh;
Arise with joy, thou faithful band,
To meet the Lord most high!

MONDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

I will extol thee, my God, O King; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.—The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.—The eyes of all wait upon thee.—He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him. Ps. 145.

He who knows the Lord and gives heed to His works and providence must ever be full of thankfulness, his mouth is full of the praise of God. He never ceases to admire God's greatness, power, and goodness, encountering at every step traces and footprints of God, who is everywhere present and everywhere bestows His blessings. He desires to make the Lord known unto all men, that all may praise Him. All creatures "wait" upon Him for their preservation and sustenance. That which God does not preserve cannot preserve itself. He opens His rich and bounteous "hand," and blesses and satisfies heaven and earth with life, strength, and joy. Though it often seems that things should not be as they are, and it is impossible to understand how God can permit this or that, yet it can be said without hesitation concerning Him, "The Lord is righteous in all His ways and merciful in all His works."

No creature can charge Him with sin or misdemeanor. What a sustaining truth is this, "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him. He also will

hear their cry and save them!" They who fear His word, who are careful not to trespass even in the smallest things, to them are the eyes of the Lord turned; He will surely gratify every desire of their heart. He preserveth them that love Him. It is impossible to describe the privileges that His beloved ones enjoy. His eyes are turned toward them whose eyes turn to Him. But whoever impiously does not fear the Lord, will be destroyed.

Refrain, O child of God, from grieving;
With God's wise dealings be content,
His guiding providence perceiving,
And gracious will, in each event.
The Lord, our Maker, knows indeed
Our every sorrow, every need.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come into the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2: 1—4. But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 1 Tim. 5: 8.

It is a matter of great concern to the Christian that all men should be saved; he sees in every human being the price and value of Christ's precious blood. At the sight of any human being he thinks: "Alas! also for this one the Savior died upon the cross; this one also is bought with His blood; for this one also is deliverance and salvation prepared; this one also is called to the Lamb's supper." How can a heart that loves Jesus and His kingdom entertain such thoughts without at the same time commending his fellowmen, through prayer and supplication, to Him who has the key to all hearts, the hammer that crushes all rocks, and turns the hearts of men as streams of water. Young people, above all, should deeply concern every devout mind,—the youth whom Satan and the world especially seek to lead

into destruction. O youth in thy bloom! when I behold thee I wish that I could place thee in the arms of Jesus. He would guide thee so charmingly. He would make thee so happy. Why should the blood of Jesus be lost upon thee? Let me place it on thine heart. He will bring thee peace and joy, such as the world can not give. But if it be a matter of great importance to the Christian that all men should be saved, how much more important must it be to him that his children, those of his own house, and his friends, be saved! How can he save others and see his own perish? The apostle Paul is so particular about this, that neglect of those of your own house is, in his eyes, worse than denial of the faith; worse than being an infidel. If you would not deny all faith and render your prayers, your singing and reading, your knowledge, and confidence in Christ of no avail; if you would not be worse than an infidel, then strive with greater earnestness than heretofore to attain the salvation of yourself and your household; do not rest until you have accomplished the salvation of yourself and of your house.

Joyfully, then, let us spread the glad news,
Never this service for Jesus refuse,
Never a moment to work for Him lose;
Joyfully work for Jesus.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. Mat. 25: 13. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. 1 John 4: 17.

He who does not live in the intoxication of the senses, but is awakened out of the sleep in which the children of the world slumber only too soundly, so numbers his days as to employ them wisely in the service for which they are given. He does this gladly because every day brings him nearer to the glorious consummation for which his soul and body heartily long. The Christian as a child of eternity, a citizen of heaven, a

member of the household of God, is ever preparing himself, as long as he remains here on earth, for his marriage day, for that moment in which he, as the bride of the Lamb, shall be taken into the home of the Bridegroom. He watches constantly; he stands at the door that he may be ready at once to go in with the Bridegroom when He comes and opens the door. He is as one daily dying from this life; as one quickened, every day he becomes more alive and lays ever stronger hold on the life eternal unto which he is called. (1 Tim. 6: 12). That which he accomplishes in death, namely, to find the door unto eternal life, he has learned during his life. He carries the Door, the Way, in his heart. For him to live is Christ and to die is gain. This is the only way unto salvation. By this are the children of God known. They have the love of God in them; and because of this love they tremble not before the grave, death, and judgment. For "perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John 4: 18).

When my last hour is close at hand,
My last sad journey taken,
Do Thou, Lord Jesus, by me stand,
Let me not be forsaken.
O Lord, my spirit I resign
Into Thy loving hands divine;
'Tis safe within Thy keeping.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. Judg. 10: 15. The Lord do that which seemeth to him good. 2 Sam. 10: 12. We do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. Col. 1: 9. 10.

The Christian's compass according to which he directs his course on the ocean of life, to which he pays the closest attention, and without which he dares not make a single move, is the will and pleasure of his God and Savior. For he knows that he will be wrecked and strike upon shoals or enter upon a course contrary to

that of his destination as soon as he turns his eyes away from the will and pleasure of God. Consequently nothing is more sacred or of more importance to him on earth and in heaven than this holy and acceptable will of God. It is more to him than all the wisdom of man, more than the intellect of the angels. He sacrifices to it his own wisdom and all other wisdom. He cannot rest assured before he knows that he has taken the way and the course, which God's will, his compass, points out to him. This was also the sense of the apostle Paul; for this reason he prayed and implored in behalf of the Colossians, who were already enlightened, that God would fill them with the "knowledge of His will." He desired above all else that they walk worthily, pleasing the Lord in all things. Our whole Christianity, all our knowledge and virtuous deeds are without value, if we have not the Lord's will and pleasure in view, if we be prompted by any other consideration, and live to please ourselves or others. To please God is the indicator on the scale to which you must pay close attention. It should always be even and not incline to the right or to the left. Onward and upward!

Order my footsteps by Thy Word,
And make my heart sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. The sorrows of death compassed me——he brought me forth also into a large place. Ps. 18: 2. 4. 19. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth.—Ps. 40: 2. 3.

These are the words of one who is delivered, liberated, and pardoned, who for a long time has fought against flesh and blood, Satan and the world, to get rid of the power and dominion of sin, who at length through faith in Christ, the Atoner, has found salvation, peace,

and power to conquer. Now he clings unto the Lord with the heart's delight, full of joy and gratitude, because he is no longer compelled to serve sin and Satan; the chains of sin, the yoke of the oppressor, are now broken; his heart finds its pleasure and only joy in serving the Lord, and in being led by His Spirit. Is the same true in regard to you, dear reader? Are you saved out of the horrible pit of evil passions? Or have you, perhaps, only plunged from one pit into the other, floundered from one mire into another? Look into your own heart and see whether there is a mire therein, whether Jesus only is there. Do you stand on this rock? Are you within this entrenchment and so compassed about by Him that your enemies can no more overthrow you? Be careful, dear friend. Do not sing the new song too loudly; do not pose with too much security; you may, perhaps, again make a false step. Let no self-reliance, no self-complacency, dwell together with your confidence in God in your heart. Be humble, while at the same time you rejoice in your salvation. Nevertheless, be without fear; for the Lord is in reality a rock upon which you may stand in safety Only beware lest you regard yourself an immovable rock.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me!
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side that flowed,
Be of sin the perfect cure;
Save me, Lord! and make me pure.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Ps. 24: 7. Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord. Ps. 118: 19. Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. Is. 62: 11. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation. Zech. 9: 9.

Thus the Son of God was proclaimed to the pious Israelites; thus they waited for Him, and thus they ex-

pected Him. Now that He is here, few or none concern themselves about Him. At that time they lifted up their "gates" and opened wide the "doors" of their hearts, wishing that He might enter. Now, after He is come, the doors and the gates are closed against Him. Not so, dear soul! Enlarge your heart. Close the doors of your senses outwardly against the world and open them inwardly to the coming Redeemer. Yearn for Him with all the desire of your heart. He is knocking for admittance into your heart by His Word and by His Spirit, saying, "Open unto me; make your gates high and wide." He announces Himself to you by His messengers; they must, according to His commandment, cry out to you, "Daughter of Zion: thy King cometh unto thee." Wilt thou not hear? Wilt thou like the whole world still close thine heart and let Him wait until His patience and mercy are at an end and the time of thy visitation hath passed by? Yearn for Him; open thine heart to Him now, when He announces Himself, now when He knocks for admittance; then shall He, the righteous One, come in unto thee and make thee righteous. He, the Savior, will save thee and help thee where thou art helpless, in thy sanctification and salvation, in the battle against sin, the world, and the devil. For it is written, "Who is this King of glory?" and the answer is, "The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Such a King you need; without Him you can not be victorious.

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!
Behold, the King of glory waits;
The King is drawing near,
The Savior of the world is here;
Life and salvation He doth bring,
Wherefore rejoice, and gladly sing:
We praise Thee, Father, now,
Creator, wise art Thou.

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the

adoption of sons. Gal. 4: 4. 5 **Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.** Ps. 2: 12.

When lying in our blood, the Son of God came to seek us, to heal, console, and save us, His miserable brethren. He was not ashamed of us in our misery. But if you are ashamed of Him and will not kiss His hands and feet that are pierced for you; if you do not surrender yourself to Him and pay homage to Him; if you do not permit Him to save you, then His wrath will at last be kindled, after having patiently suffered you all through your life. His wrath will burn the fiercer, the longer He has gone after you, seeking in vain to kiss you. When we remember that His name is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9: 6), our hearts should throb with joy that we may kiss this High and Exalted One. We should in a child-like and trusting manner draw near unto Him as to a brother, throw ourselves into His arms and expect all things from Him. Does not he who despises Christ deserve His wrath? This "Son" can become terribly "angry" when His patience is abused and despised. As the world now-a-days becomes ever bolder in sinning against His patience and in disregard of the Son, it may be that His wrath will soon be kindled. It is high time that all who would be saved, "kiss the Son," and draw near to Him while it is yet day. The time will come when He no longer shall appear as a Prince of Peace, Father and Counsellor, but as Judge and Avenger, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thess. 1: 8). Ye children of men, why will ye not kiss the Son who now comes to you in love, but who shall once come to terrify the unbelieving?

My lips with shame my sins confess
Against Thy law, against Thy grace:
Lord, should Thy judgment grow severe,
I am condemned, but Thou art clear.

Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hope, still hovering round Thy Word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair.

MONDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever. Ps. 125: 1. 2. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Ps. 34: 7.

What a fortress, what a castle! Immovable, firm as Mount Zion, on which stand the temple and the castle of David, stands the Christian who trusts in God. God's "mountains are round about" him, as round about Jerusalem, yea, the Lord, the Lord Himself, who holds heaven and earth in His hand, is round about him, is round about all who put their trust in Him. And besides, the angels of God, the mighty in power, who "do His bidding," are round about him as an intrenchment. If the generals of earth trust in their camps, forts, and armies, should not the Christian trust in the power and mercy of the Lord that is round about him on all sides? Should he fear? What a fort, then, is the heart of the Christian! What a camp when several such trusting hearts are congregated and pray, and wage battle together! How terrible to the enemy, how invincible, how dreadful to hell and all the children of darkness! Oh, had we the eyes to see what surrounds the believers, and who it is that lives in them, we should see mountains that no power from hell can move, we should see a castle, a fortress that causes Satan to tremble. For the Lord dwells in the believers. Who shall overpower Him? Who shall overpower the heart, the fort, in which dwells the Most High? the heart surrounded by the Almighty, before which the angels encamp themselves? Beloved, when fear would lay hold of you, when Satan would terrify you, when the enemies threaten you, do not forget

Him who is in you, who is greater and stronger than he that is in the world (1 John 4: 4). Do not forget Him who is "round about" you.

In Thine arms I rest me;
Foes who would molest me
Cannot reach me here;
Though the earth be shaking,
Every heart be quaking;
Jesus calms my fear;
Sin and hell, in conflict fell,
With their bitter storms assail me,
Jesus will not fail me.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Ps. 23: 5. 6.

David always prayed for this one thing, that he might "dwell in the house of the Lord" all the days of his life (Ps. 27: 4). What, then, did he find there? "Goodness and mercy." What more does man need? Completely destitute of that which is good but rich in all that is evil, there can be nothing of which man is more in need than mercy. Mercy he finds in the Lord only, in the house of the Lord, not in the tents of the wicked. Wherefore David would rather be a doorkeeper, porter, the least in God's house, than the greatest in the "tents of wickedness." What more did he find? A "table" prepared before him with food that strengthened and equipped him so that he became unconquerable and terrifying to all his enemies. What more did he find? A well of oil, an ointment for his head, given in full measure that he should never be in want. This can be seen in his psalms, so full of unction; from these we may ever draw sufficient ointment. May we come to this table, this source of unction? Most assuredly. More free-

ly than men could in David's time. Now it is open to all; now all are invited to this table; now all things are made ready for all in Christ Jesus (Luke 14: 17). You may every day and every hour eat at this table, draw from this oil-well. Whosoever believes in Christ is himself a well from which flow "rivers of living water" (John 7: 38). Whosoever believes in Christ has the bread of life, and shall not hunger nor thirst (John 6: 35). Why, then, do not all believe in Him? Because Satan, the god of this world, has blinded their minds so that they do not see the clear light of the Gospel (2 Cor. 4: 4); and because men love the praise of men more than the praise of God (John 5: 44; 12: 43).

The hill of Zion yields
A thousand secret sweets,
Before we reach the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets.
Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're marching through Immanuel's ground
To fairer worlds on high.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion; O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Ps. 65: 1. 2. Come and see the works of God. — — — Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place. Ps. 66: 5. 12.

How many quiet psalms of praise ascend to God from the hearts of those who trust in Him and call upon Him in their need! They know how readily, gloriously and wonderfully He helps. They can testify to it, as the psalmist, and invite men, saying, "Come and see the wonderful works of God toward the children of men. He brings us uninjured through fire and water; He causes men to ride over our heads, but He sustains us nevertheless, yea, He even at the same time refreshes

us." Truly, he who has the Lord with him, and calls upon Him, feels much refreshment even in the heat of affliction. Wherefore the whole world, all flesh, cries out to the Lord in need. Men's misery drives them to Him who alone can deliver them, and of whom they would feel no need if it were not for their distress. What would He not do for them if they came to Him, not driven by necessity, but by love and yearning! How He would refresh them! He calls all who labor and are heavyladen, that He may refresh them. May this word quicken our faith and our trust in Him, that we never doubt His willingness and ability to help! He will lead us through all difficulties.

The God that rules on high,
That all the earth surveys,
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas:
This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our Love:
He will send down His heavenly powers
To carry us above.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. Ps. 27: 3. 4.

We shall consider this whole psalm to-day, because it is full of the courage of faith, full of a feeling of God's nearness. He who fears God has nothing to be afraid of. He for whom the light of God shines, who is comforted by God's salvation, has no reason to fear. If the wicked come upon him to "eat up his flesh," they shall stumble and fall. For they have to deal with the living God, who shields the God-fearing and is a fiery wall round about them. Yea, though great hosts of enemies and devils attack the believer, yet his heart is not dis-

mayed, because they are all nothing as against God. They that champion our cause are greater in number than they who encamp themselves against us. God does not forsake anyone who trusts in Him. But He who would thus trust in God, and in all things depend upon His power and goodness, must cherish no other wish but to walk in the presence of the Lord; he must always have God before his eye and in his heart, commune with God as a member of His house, and seek Him anew as often as he loses sight of Him. This is the only thing he desires of the Lord, and that he seeks after. His joy and happiness are in that word and commandment of the Lord, "Seek ye my face!" This commandment is to him more than a thousand worlds. He rejoices in a child-like, yea, a king-like manner, because he is not only permitted but commanded to seek the face of God, and because hope is consequently given him of finding Him. Hence he constantly seeks the face of God, the presence of the Lord. When this Pillar of Fire shines in his heart—what should the Christian then fear? He is trustful and of good cheer; because the Lord goes before and prepares the way for him.

As true as God's own word is true,
Nor earth nor hell with all their crew
Against us shall prevail.
A jest and by-word are they grown:
God is with us; we are His own;
Our victory cannot fail.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Heb. 11: 1. For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. 2 Tim. 1: 12. (Abraham was) fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Rom. 4: 21.

If your faith and works be of God, then you have divine certainty; your faith can no more be moved than God can be moved. If your faith have God's testi-

mony and power in the heart as its foundation, it stands as secure as God Himself. If, however, your faith be only a fancy or a supposition built on human arguments, a self-wrought evidence, *then* it is subject to the same changes as all human things are subject to. The faith which is wrought by God in the heart can not be overthrown by anyone: it is a great gift of God. There are many who themselves are the authors of their faith; hence their faith is as weak and wavering as they themselves are, altogether dependent on their own moods and on the weather. If the weather be nice their faith will be strong; but if it storms, the wind will blow away their faith, as it happened to Peter on the sea. Since faith must accomplish so much in man; since it must overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil, and gain heaven and eternal life, yea, God Himself; since it must create a new man and translate him into the heavenly kingdom with Christ, and make him partaker of Christ, and of His divine nature, God's child and heir, a fellow-citizen of the sanctified and one of the houeshold of God, holy, righteous, glorious and blissful as God Himself,—therefore faith must be more than the work of man. It must be of divine nature, born of God, placed in the heart by God Himself and inspired, animated and preserved by the power of God. Hence we have reason to pray: Lord, increase our faith!

Faith is a living power from heaven,
That grasps the promise God hath given,
A confidence in Christ alone
Whose grace cannot be overthrown.

Faith feels the Spirit's kindling breath
In love and hope that conquer death;
Faith worketh joyfulness in God,
And trusts and blesses e'en the rod.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

For I fear, lest when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults: — — — and that I shall bewail many which have sinned. 2 Cor. 12: 20. 21.

Much evil may steal into awakened Christians, many a sin may revive in them if they do not watch. All these sins enumerated by Paul appear again; he who considers himself an awakened and converted believer, and makes light of such sins, who neither mourns them nor repents and eradicates them, is in a blinded and perverted state—a condition worse than total ignorance of Christ. He continues in devotional exercises, in singing psalms, in oral prayer, in reading and in everything which is in vogue, but does not change and better himself,—and yet he considers himself a Christian. Then a person is in the condition described in 2 Pet. 2: 20—22. Beloved, always think thus: If Paul and Christ were to step in among us; if they were witnesses to all our deeds, would they find us as they would wish or would we find them as we would not wish? If Paul found such shameful things in his congregations, could he not also find them in our congregations? And how would his countenance then look? "Shall I praise you or shall I come unto you with a rod? For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." Let no man who finds pleasure in himself deceive himself; but let him consider himself in the mirror of the word and prove his conduct according to the rule of truth.

Yet, though conscience' voice appall me,
Father, I will seek Thy face;
Though Thy child I dare not call me,
Yet receive me to Thy grace;
Do not for my sins forsake me,
Let not yet Thy wrath o'ertake me.

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob. Is. 59:20. **Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.** Heb. 10: 7. **For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.** Luke 19: 10.

It was promised that He should come, and lo, He came; not to judge nor to condemn the world, but to seek and to save all who are lost. Who could

have compelled Him to come to the lost? No one; naught but His love urged and compelled Him. At the sight of man's perversion, wretchedness and eternal misery He said to His Father, "Lo, I come; spare them! I will do Thy will." Thus it was also the Father's will that He should come and save that which was lost. He was not sent out in wrath; He came not in wrath, but in pure love. Love sent Him to us. This love we must worship, because to love we owe this great gift from heaven. Love took Him from His throne; love nailed Him to the cross.—But who profits by His coming? To whom is He come? To Zion, to those who turn from their sins. He who will not separate himself from sin and the world, can not rejoice in His coming. To Zion belongs every one who with all his heart turns to the Lord his God, who feels his need of a Redeemer and therefore prays to God that He will send him help out of of Zion. All who turn their face toward Zion and long to be set free from the bondage of sin—to them He is come; unto them He is of God made "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1: 30).

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy days be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my star, my sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk
Till traveling days are done.

MONDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. John 1: 45. I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. — — For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. Prov. 8: 17. 35.

Job exclaimed, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" (Job. 23: 3). The disciples cried, "We have found Him!" What do you say, beloved? The Savior

is come to let Himself be found; He became man to let Himself be found of man. If you have not found Him, or if you do not seek Him, you have missed your destiny as a human being. If you do not seek and find the God and Savior incarnate, it were better you had never been born. O ye children of men! God is become a child of man that ye might all the easier find Him; and yet ye will not come to Him to receive life from Him? God's wisdom and love are personally and bodily before you in the likeness of Man; Christ says, "I love them that love me; and they that seek me early, shall find me. For whoso findeth me findeth life. He that believeth not on me remaineth in death and shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." What soul among men that hears such an invitation can yet hold back and hesitate to seek Him? If God had not sent His Son as a gift into the world, we might seek all our life without finding anything that could make us perfectly happy. Now He is here, who will give unto all rest for their souls, redeem and save all. Who has found Him?

Not the earth with all its treasure
Could content this soul of mine;
Not alone for heavenly pleasure
Doth my thirsty spirit pine;
For its Savior yearning ever:
I will leave my Jesus never!

TUESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him. — — — And behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests. 2 Chron. 13: 10. 12. Through God we shall do valiantly; for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. Ps. 108: 13. If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul. Ps. 124: 2-4.

The narrative of Abijah's war against Jeroboam deserves to be read as recorded in the chapter referred to

(2 Chron. 13). Abijah, with four hundred thousand men, conquered Jeroboam with eight hundred thousand men. For the latter had cast out the priests of the Lord and introduced idolatry. Abijah could say, "God Himself is with us for our captain, and His priests." The One is stronger than eight hundred thousand men. He who has God on his side, as the captain of his forces, will always conquer, even though he succumb. As in the battles of this world, so, and much more so, in the spiritual battle against the flesh, the world, and the devil; though sin, evil desires, Satan, the enemies of Christ and the truth, persecute us and reinforce themselves with all the powers of hell, yet they are unable to conquer us if Christ be with us and in us. But he who forsakes the Lord and seeks other protection will be vanquished. The Lord alone is strong and valiant in this war. He alone is able to conquer. Let no man depend upon his own arm. Give up all hopes of self and cling to the Lord. Through God we shall do valiantly and tread down our enemies. The Almighty, the Invincible, the All-conquering, is with us. He is our buckler and defence; who, then, can be against us? Let it be true that the Lord is with us and that we are with Him. Let it not only be a thought and a fancy; an imaginary appropriation of the protection of God does not protect us against a single enemy, much less against thousands. If the Lord be with you, you must be with Him, and remain in Him, through faith, hope and love, through heartfelt, continuous communion and prayer. In this fortress you must constantly remain; for if the enemy find you outside of it, you are lost.

If dangers gather round,
Still keep me calm and fearless;
Help me to bear the cross,
When life is dark and cheerless;
To overcome my foe
With words and actions kind;
When counsel I would know,
Good counsel let me find.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. Ps. 139: 1-3.

It is with such thoughts as are expressed in this psalm that he who has faith in God is inspired. He who says that he believes in God, but does not believe that God sees all that there is in the heart of man, upon his tongue, and in his hand, and does not fear this all-seeing eye, is a liar. It is not true that he believes in God. May David's faith revive us! Never leave us, Thou all-seeing, Thou almighty, Thou holy and righteous God! May we not for a moment forget that Thou searchest us and knowest us; that Thou always and everywhere surroundest us, that none of our thoughts are hid from Thee, that no word on our tongue escapes Thee! "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day" (Ps. 139, 7—12). He who in the Spirit of Christ never has anything else but this truth in mind and walks in this pious frame—how holy, righteous, contrite and humble; how trusting and child-like he constantly lives and walks! But he who forgets this truth, forgets the all-seeing and all-knowing, the all-searching and omnipresent Savior,—how can faith and piety be in his mind? His Christianity is timid; his religion is ungodly; his virtue, hypocrisy; his righteousness, sin and vice.

Present alike in every place,
Thy Godhead we adore:
Beyond the bound of time and space,
Thou dwell'st for evermore.

In wisdom infinite Thou art.
Thine eye doth all things see;
And every thought of every heart
Is fully known to Thee.

THURSDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 2: 3. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 1 Cor. 9: 25. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment, him will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. Rev. 3: 5. 12.

There is no doubt that he who lives in Christ gets no rest either from the devil or the world or his own flesh. These three enemies have formed a black alliance against you. If you would stand your ground and not fall into their hands again, you must enter into a holy alliance with Christ and His Spirit. You must put on the full armor of God and always appear in it. You must be equipped with the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, always watchful and ready to repulse and tread down everything that the world, the flesh and hell may offer or tempt you to do. But beware of beating the air; it does not injure the enemy nor do you yourself profit by it. St. Paul says, "So fight I, not as one that beateth the air" (1 Cor. 9: 26). One often fights hard against the enemies that are outside of the house without heeding the enemy that is in the house. One denies himself outward things and nourishes and nurses inward enemies. Whoever fights in the right manner is temperate in all things; he denies himself, his egotism, his greed for honor in every form; his covetousness; worldliness, sensuality, gross or subtle; his pride, self-importance, spiritual or worldly. He that overcometh all, even himself, shall be crowned; but if there be one single enemy that you have not conquered, you are no conqueror and can not receive the crown. If you let a single evil inclination rule in your heart, then you have

a thief in the house, an enemy within the boundaries of your kingdom, who will contest your quiet and peace, and will not permit you to win a complete victory, nor to obtain the triumph and the crown.

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe!—

Lord, give us such a faith as this,
And then, whate'er may come,
We'll taste, e'en here, the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home.

FRIDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, — — — who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling — — — according to his grace — — — now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 2 Tim. 1: 8-10.

The whole world is ashamed of Christ and His Gospel of redemption. If you want to be a Christian, then be not ashamed of this most holy and most glorious work. The devil has accomplished that men not only feel ashamed of Christ, but also of God and everything that pertains to God. Men desire to be altogether unholy, wordly, and earthly, sensuous and carnal. So deeply has the world fallen, so far has it departed from God. Who will save it? The merciful God continues to proclaim and offer His saving Gospel, no matter how much the world despises it. The voice of those who proclaim God's salvation in Christ is not yet silenced; it sounds forth everywhere. The grace which is manifested in the incarnation, life, and passion of Jesus is yet praised. Still it is proclaimed loudly, "Christ has by His death destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light, has reconciled us with God, has redeemed and bought us to God and has earned an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, for us in heaven." If you have be-

come a partaker of this grace, then be not ashamed of it. Let your heart rejoice therein. Confess and praise Him and His work of redemption before the whole world. For He deserves it, and man, miserable as he is, can not be helped except by Him who was born in the stable, who died on the cross, and who now sits at the right hand of God. Nevertheless, do not confess and glory in Christianity with your mouth only, but also with your whole being and life; then you shall soon count more partakers of the same grace and joy.

Love caused Thy incarnation,
Love brought Thee down to me.
Thy thirst for my salvation
Procured my liberty.
O Love beyond all telling,
That lead Thee to embrace,
In love all love excelling,
Our lost and fallen race.

SATURDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? And the man came into the house. Gen. 24: 31. 32. If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we wil come unto him, and make our abode with him. John 14: 23.

Oh, that you as hospitably and readily would receive Him who stands at the door of your heart and knocks; as kindly and heartily ask Him in, and escort Him into your heart, as Laban received Abraham's servant, when he saw the beautiful gifts, the bracelets, and the rings, which he had brought with him for his sister! Oh, that you might just as heartily long to possess your Savior! Then would He bring with Him much more for you than Eliezer brought for Rebekah and Laban. He would as readily enter in to you, and lo! He would bring His Father with Him also. If He does not give you bracelets and rings, yet He will place the bond of perfectness, eternal love, heavenly peace, everlasting life, the kingdom of heaven, in your heart. The centurion who asked the Savior to speak a word only to heal his servant, and dared

not invite Him to come Himself, received this answer, "I will come" (Mat. 8). Shall He not come to you, when you cry unto Him night and day, "Lord Jesus, come Thou Thyself unto me?" Yes, He comes to every soul who heartily longs for Him. He verily does not remain away. He became man just because it was His delight to be among the children of men. He will not leave us fatherless; he comes to us and remains with us forever, which He has said not once, but many times. Shall not He keep His word, who is the true and faithful witness?

Welcome, O my Savior, now!
Hail! my Portion, Lord, art Thou!
Here, too, in my heart I pray:
O prepare Thyself a way.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. Is. 40: 3. 4; Mat. 3: 3. **Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.** Mal. 3: 1.

The Lord exhorts us to prepare the way for Him. He also promises to send His messenger to prepare the way. It is, therefore, not we alone who do it. For that reason we should not be discouraged and ask, "How shall I be able to prepare the way for God, the Most High?" You shall desire it, and rejoice to see that the Lord comes to you and into your heart. Only surrender your heart. Long for Him. Give the present tenants of your heart, your pride, your faint-heartedness, your coldness, your indolence, their dismissal. Let it be your will because it is the Lord's will. Only offer yourself. The Lord will send His messenger to meet you, His preparatory grace to repentance, power to a change of mind, by which all paths are made "straight" for the Lord, and by which the most beautiful way is pre-

pared into your heart. The Lord gives us what He demands from us, what by His coming into the heart He assumes in us. When He says, "Prepare the way for me, that I may come unto you," He means, "Let me prepare the way to your heart; let me come unto you; open up unto me, when I knock; hear my voice, when I call you; do not run away from me; do not barricade the way against me; do not turn away from me when I turn unto you. Do not be self-sufficient. Do not trust in your own virtue and strength, because this is a mountain in the way, and it must be carried off. Do not doubt my grace and mercy, because this doubt is the valley that must be filled with confidence in me. Do not seek yourself, nor honor, nor pleasure, nor anything beside me, because these are crooked ways that must be made straight with the honest intention of pleasing me. All crude prejudices must be made plain and be changed into the purest longing and desire to become one with me."

Prepare your hearts to meet Him,
Ye sons of men, prepare!
Make straight the way, and greet Him,
The Savior draweth near.
He leaves His heavenly throne
To be our humble brother,
Born of the Virgin Mother,
And yet God's only Son.

MONDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace. Heb. 13: 8. 9. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him. Ps. 103: 17; 117: 2.

Unbelief always rests upon this sandy foundation, "It is not now as in former days; God no longer performs miracles nor does He reveal Himself as He did in former times."

But if this were true, He, the Unchangeable, would have ceased to be the God, Savior, Redeemer, and Father

of men; He would have altered His nature and essence. Only possess the faith of the fathers, and their piety, and you shall also possess and perceive the ancient God. All His promises in the Scriptures pertain to all times, to all days, even unto "the end of the world" (Mat. 28: 20). "His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him" (Ps. 72: 17). "In Him shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12: 3). In all times, through all centuries, at all places, He is and remains the same, performs the same miracles and manifests the same grace, if only He is appropriated by faith. He who does not have the same God as the Fathers had, has not the same faith as they had; he has departed from the living God. He who does not have and perceive the same Christ as the apostles had and perceived, does not have the same faith as they had; he has deserted the Christian, apostolic faith. Either Christ has not been such as He is represented in the Gospel, or He is still the same, and shall remain the same throughout all eternity. Why did He not perform as many mighty deeds in His native city as in Judea? Because of their unbelief (Mat. 13: 58). Why does He no longer seem the same to our century? Because of its unbelief. Believe as Paul, love as John, and you shall have the Christ of Paul and John.

Shine on our hearts, eternal God!
With rays of beauty shine;
O, let Thy favor crown our days,
And all their round be Thine.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Rev. 19: 9. Friend, how comest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? Mat. 22: 12.

The marriage of the Lamb is gloriously described. (Rev. 19). What jubilation and exultation are heard there! (v. 6. 7). As the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, as the voice of mighty thunderings, it is sounded forth, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His

wife hath made herself ready, adorned for the marriage." And how is she adorned? Arrayed in fine linen, clean and white—His costly linen, His righteousness—the bride appears at His marriage supper! How blessed is he that is called unto this supper, who comes in the shining linen of His righteousness, in the festive garb! But the parasite (Mat. 22) who had no wedding garment on, and who for that reason was ejected, is, without doubt, the patron lord of those who would receive Christ's righteousness without putting it on and do not in reality appear in its shining beauty. When it is said, "And to her (the bride) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints," then we should bear in mind two things: first, that this garment must be given, bestowed and presented to us; that it can not be produced by any man through his own power; and secondly, that the saints accept it, appropriate it, put it on, and walk in it. Consequently, the virtues of Christ, or His righteousness, are also called "the righteousness of the saints," inasmuch as they have put on and appropriated Christ, His mind and Spirit, and inasmuch as their earnest endeavors, all their thoughts and aspirations, are to be adorned with this fine "linen" unto the day of the Lamb, the day of the Bridegroom, that they may be accepted by Him.

Their joyful anthems raise,
Till heaven re-echoes with the tone
Of that great hymn of praise,
And all its blessed throng
Unite ther myriad voices
In one eternal song.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. John 12: 46. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Tit. 2: 11.

Christ's birth was like the sun rising upon a world buried in night and darkness. Yea, He is the Dayspring

from on high that has visited us who "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1: 78. 79). "In Him was life; and life was the light of men." Therefore the apostles declared with all frankness, "Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John 1: 2). This life, this light, was "full of grace and truth" (John 1: 14), full of mercy and love to man. What a night, then, was the night of Christ's birth! Then the brightest sun was shining. It is not without its significance that Christ was born in the night. You should learn from this that with Him was the light born, that the light came into the night of this world; and that everything is darkness and black night in all men if Christ, the Light of the World, arise not in them. He who does not possess the Light of Life is and remains full of darkness throughout all eternity. A dead light can not help those who are dead. All have been in need of a living and life-giving light, and we must needs have the same. This light is not extinguished when all the lights of earth and sky are extinct. But it is revealed that it may shine for you; that you may be enlightened by it; and that you may walk in its radiance. For if you walk in darkness, and if you love the deeds of darkness, you are among the children of night and death, who love darkness rather than light.

O, how shall I receive Thee,
How greet Thee, Lord, aright?
All nations long to see Thee,
My hope, my heart's delight!

O kindle, Lord, most holy,
Thy lamp within my breast,
To do in spirit lowly
All that may please Thee best.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Mat. 20:

28. **That he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.** Tit. 2: 14.

Verily, He has taken upon Himself the form of a servant! He who was in the form of God and had the divine nature; He whom all the angels of God worshipped, whose slightest beck they stood ready to obey with lightning-like rapidity, is revealed upon earth to become the servant of man. Nor could any outward glory be seen in Him as long as He went about on earth. He was of men the most despised. Although He was the Lord of all lords, yet He went voluntarily into captivity that He might redeem the servants from their captivity. If a man who is called lord, should do this for his servants, he would be admired; and yet it would be nothing compared with what the Son of God has done for us. For He is not become the servant of His equals, but the Creator has become the servant of His creatures, yea, of fallen, faithless, sinful, and godless creatures. Take your place at the Lord's manger and consider Him in relation to yourself. Behold, dear soul, the God of heaven and earth lies there for you, and in your behalf, in the form of a servant, in poverty and humility, wrapped in swaddling-clothes as a feeble child. In your behalf He served as a bondman thirty-three years that He might set you free from bondage. And yet you will not surrender yourself to Him even now, after He is exalted above all things, having all power in heaven and upon earth in His hand; will you not regard it as the highest honor to serve this Lord who has been your servant so long? Consider this well.

Come, Thou long expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's Strength and Consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son..... He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest. Luke 1: 31. 32. And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. John 1: 14. Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. 1 Tim. 3: 16.

"For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Heb. 2: 11). "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same" (Heb. 2: 14) in order to redeem them therefrom. His love compelled Him, so that He was willing to have all things in common with us, sin excepted. This is a mystery which can never be too much admired and adored, "The Word was made flesh," a passage before which the Fathers bowed their knees as often as they quoted it. If you will not do that, let your heart at least bow down. We should never have come to God if God had not first come to us. We were too deeply sunk in depravity. God had to step down from His glory; no other hand could reach so far down; no power, no love was great enough to help us up. But now our joy is unspeakable, and this thought, God is become man, God is made flesh, should elevate us above other things, and make our souls perfectly happy. Nevertheless, Christ *for* us, made manifest in the flesh, can not be to us what He should be, and would be; He must be made manifest in *our* flesh, that is to say, *in* us. He has also promised this to all (John 14: 21—23). Concerning this the apostle Paul also speaks, as concerning a fact well known among Christians, "But when it pleased God to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. 1: 15. 16). However little people nowadays like to hear this truth, it is nevertheless indispensable. No one can be acceptable to God unless he is revealed in Christ, and Christ in him.

This is the Christ, our God and Lord,
Who in all need shall aid afford;
He will Himself our Savior be,
From all our sins to set us free.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Rom. 8: 3. 4.

Nothing good could be expected from us before Christ came; but now God expects everything from us, having given us His Son and all things with Him. He expects as much and no more than He has given us. The image and the nature of Jesus must be developed in us; we must be made like unto Him. To that end is He given to us. He who does not use Him thus, from him will be taken that which he has or which he seems to have. Jesus will imprint Himself or His image and nature in us; He will be born, and attain to the perfect man in us (Eph. 4: 13). Only the least number among men know whereunto Jesus is given, what He wants to be and what He can be to them. He who knows and comprehends this, cannot sufficiently admire God's grace and love, but he strives to reach the goal and God's admirable purpose. The Father loves His Son so dearly that He much desires to see His impress on all men, to see His image shine forth in them and from them. No man can be acceptable to God, or be acceptable to Him, in whom God does not see Jesus, His Son, His image and His nature. Do you know, my beloved, for what purpose you live and what your object in life is? It is high time that you receive Jesus in your heart, in your mind, and in your whole being. If not, He will be taken from you as the entrusted talent was taken from the slothful servant.

Oh, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2: 7. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Mat. 18: 4. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill. Ps. 113: 7.

God's only Begotten becomes the first-born of an humble virgin, lies in a stable, in a manger, wrapped in wretched swaddling-clothes. This is He who spreads out the heavens as a garment and contains the ocean and all the ends of the earth as in a bucket. What greatness! What humility! God's Son in swaddling-clothes! We see here the will of God. Even though God, as some say, has sent His Son into the world to serve as an example and a pattern only, come and see what an example lies in the manger. Come here and learn humility and meekness from this God-given pattern. Learn here to lay aside your pride, haughtiness, conceit, vainglory, your self-importance, and high-soaring thoughts and endeavors, and bring it all as a sacrifice to this Little One. The Creator of the heavens and the earth has barely room to be born in, and for your dense and broad pride the world is too narrow; you have nowhere room to spread out and to make yourself as important as you wish. Now let Jesus be your example! Become as small as He. Then you will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Try it, and you shall soon find that He will become infinitely more to you, that without Him you cannot even accomplish the least, that of becoming small,—how then, should you become great? Begin by becoming small, like Jesus. Become insignificant in your own eyes, poor in spirit: then the poor little Child shall lay itself in your heart and lift you out of the dust and the dross and make you great. For what are your pride and lofty fancies but dust and dross? Away with it all! Go to the Christ-child. Consider Him rightly. Surrender yourself to Him. Then you will become something; otherwise you will never amount to anything.

Nor deem the form too lowly
That clothes Him at this hour;
For know ye what it hideth?
'Tis God's almighty power.
Though now within the manger
So poor and weak He lies,
He is the Lord of all things,
He reigns above the skies.

THE SECOND DAY OF CHRISTMAS.

And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. — — — — And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger. Luke 2: 12-16. **Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.** Is. 9: 6.

God of mercy! God's Son a babe in swaddling-clothes! And lying in a manger! "God be merciful!" the shepherds thought when they saw the child. This was the sign by which they were to know the Son of God, the Messiah. In all likelihood, none of the sign-interpreters in Israel thought of this sign. But the poor shepherds knew it now, because the Lord had told it to them at the proper time. Only be true and faithful to the Lord, and He shall give you the sign. Do not cudgel your brain; do not break your heart, but prepare a habitation for the Child, a manger and swaddling-clothes. The sign shall come to you and you shall understand. It is easy for me to believe that the whole world cannot submit to the ways of God, to a Savior who is offered to them in swaddling-clothes. He pursues such courses as are offensive and intolerable to all the world. Whosoever will submit to Him must turn his back upon the world, its mind and its manners. If not, he will be offended every moment with God and Jesus. Come, my beloved, we will not heed the world; let it pass. Go with me to the manger, and do not become offended with the poor swaddle, the manger, the stable. Look at the Child lying therein. What would a house of gold profit you if it were occupied by bats and vultures? Do not dress and decorate yourself as is customary with the world.

Do not conform yourself to the fashions and usages of the world, but to the will of God, so that you become pure and little, poor and humble. Then God will lay His Son in your heart; then you have all you need.

To Thee, then, O Jesus, this day of Thy birth,
True Godhead incarnate, omnipotent Word!
O come, let us hasten to worship the Lord!

DECEMBER THE TWENTY-SEVENTH.

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad. John 8: 56. **This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.** Ps. 118: 24. **In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.** Jer. 33: 15. **Yea, and all the prophets — — — — have likewise foretold of these days.** Acts 3: 24.

How long a time before the incarnation of the Son of God "Abraham rejoiced"! Should not we rejoice, who know the event after it has come to pass, and who can perceive its blessings in our own hearts? How intent the old covenant saints were upon this event! How they lifted up their heads and looked forward to this day, wondering if it were not soon to come! And yet so many Christians, for whom the day comes, do not rejoice in it! Nevertheless, he who partakes of that which the Lord's birth has brought him, can not but rejoice. The "Branch" of righteousness, the coming of which Isaiah proclaims, has grown up. The tree stands there, the Tree of life, into which we may all be grafted, become righteous and blessed and grow to divine greatness. The King is here who executes judgment and righteousness to all who submit to Him, voluntarily become His subjects, and surrender themselves wholly to Him. He does not *compel* any one to enter into His kingdom. He calls us graciously, and gives us the most precious promises; but the Lord mourns over him who will not suffer himself to be drawn to Him, and bears with him as long as possible. Oh, what a

divine King! Do you know the day when He was born to you and became your King?

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love.

DECEMBER THE TWENTY-EIGHTH.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2: 14.

Thus sang the angels of God in the skies at the birth of the Savior of the world. Thus sings now and forevermore redeemed humanity. Thus sing the children of peace, who have received remisison of sins as well as peace through His incarnation, and His birth. But those in whom "Christ, who is our peace" (Eph. 2: 14) is not yet born, can not sing thus. Where sin and the world yet live and rule there is no occasion for songs of peace nor for songs to the glory of God. As long as a man does not receive Him whom God has sent to his salvation, he does not give the glory to God, nor does God give him peace. Child of man, give God the glory, and He will give you peace, He will give you His Son. Give the glory to God. Confess before Him that you are a condemned sinner for whom God's Son must needs come down from heaven, that He may suffer your guilt of sin, redeem and save you. Acknowledge and confess this with an humble and contrite heart and ask God to give you His Son, that, through grace you may partake of Him. Thus you give God the glory. "Now God has received the glory due to Him: therefore, peace be unto this man! The good will of God rests upon him." Of what use is the angels' song to you otherwise? Of what use can it be to you as long as the jingle of the world and sin resounds in you, and there is no peace in your heart?

Hark, a new song rends the sky,
"Glory be to God on high,
Peace on earth, good will to men,
Christ is born in Bethlehem."

DECEMBER THE TWENTY-NINTH.

My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. Gal. 4: 19. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ — — — — that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you — — — — therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. 1 Cor. 6: 15. 19. 20.

Why should the Holy Ghost dwell in the hearts of Christians if not to testify concerning Christ and glorify Christ in them? The Holy Ghost has no other office, no other work in man than to restore the new man, Christ, in all, that the image of God, which is Christ, once more may be renewed and glorified in us all. As Christ was formed bodily in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost, so He must be formed spiritually in every true Christian. This was also the sense of the apostles; this was the object of their work; for this they often suffered great agony and pain until Christ was formed in the believers, until they had wholly put on Christ; not in the usual, profane conception of the code of morals, not by accepting a few of his sentiments, but Christ's own mind and Spirit, Christ's life and essence, nature and attributes, not by human power and skill, but by being born again, begotten from above by the Holy Ghost, so that they lived no longer, but Christ lived in them. Such is a true, spiritual Christmas; thus we celebrate Christ's nativity. He therefore, who finds and worships the newborn Babe in his heart, has become a "partaker of Christ" (Heb. 3: 14), and can rejoice in His birth. The others know not what they do. They celebrate the festival of Christ's birth as they might celebrate the birthday of a prince, and not even thus joyfully, for Christ does not seem to concern them as much.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King;
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.

By Thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. Luke 2: 28-32.

Do not envy pious Simeon, for you may have Jesus just as near, yea, even nearer than he had Him. He had Him upon his arms; but Jesus will come to you, into your heart, and be one spirit with you, live, dwell, and move in you. Stretch forth the arms of your soul, and of your faith, and of your love for Him. Open your heart to the newborn Savior as Simeon did, who longed for Him during his whole life, who waited for Him as the consolation of Israel; who, knowing of no other joy than that of beholding Him, would gladly die after having seen Him. Such hearts desire to receive Him, and they most assuredly do receive Him. If there be nothing else in your soul but ardent desire and burning thirst for Him, then He is certainly in this thirst, in this desire; then shall He certainly reveal Himself to your longing and thirsting heart, so that you shall prize the joy of possessing Him above all the joys of life; you shall no longer live to the world, yourself, and sin, but unto Him who has given Himself to you. This Child is born unto all. (Is. 9: 6). He lies before the eyes of all in His Word; by the preaching of the Gospel He is offered to us and engrafted in our hearts. (James 1: 21). Take Him, then, up in your arms; lift Him by faith and love out of the Word; ensconse Him in your heart, for He is willing and able to save your soul.

Sin, death, and hell, and Satan
Have lost their victory;
This child shall overthrow them,
As ye shall surely see.
Their wrath shall naught avail them;
Fear not, their reign is o'er;
This child shall overthrow them, —
O, hear and doubt no more!

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach. Job 32: 7. Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it. Luke 13: 8.

When the years speak, what do you hear? What does God hear? What do the brethren hear about you? The deduction you make can be nothing else but this: Repent! All your days cry out to you, Better yourself! The Lord comes to-day into His vineyard seeking after fruit. When He stops before the tree of your life and asks your days, and, more particularly, the days of this year, what do they answer? Does He find the desired fruit? Much grace has He bestowed upon you; much has He given you, but to whom much is given, of him shall much be required. The Father says, "Years have I come to seek after fruit on this tree, but have found none; cut it down." What if this were resolved to-day in heaven? Is it not possible? Have you not deserved it? At all events I have. What, then, must we do? We must, without delay, and with all our heart, go to Jesus, fall on our face before Him, who is our only mediator, and beseech Him to appear in our stead before the Father to make intercession for us. Then He will in our behalf, for you and for me, say unto the Father, "Let him alone this year also, till I shall dig about him, and dung him; then, perhaps, he will bear fruit; and if not, Thou shalt cut him down." Behold, it is due only to the intercession of Jesus that God has given you so many years. But, perhaps the coming year will be your last. Therefore, use it, and

keep close to your God and Savior, that He shall not have occasion to say, "Cut him down; why cumbereth he the ground?" God is long-suffering, which may be seen in His patience at the time of Noah; but the longer respite they were given, the greater became their wickedness. At length He let His judgment break loose. The ancient God still lives. Close, therefore, this year with earnest prayer and supplication that God may not cut you down, but, through Jesus, renew your heart unto true repentance and betterment, and that He may grant you a life according to His own pleasure.

Before Thou shalt as judge appear,
Plead as my intercessor;
And on that awful day declare
That I am Thy confessor.
Then bring me to that blessed place
Where I may see, with open face,
The glory of Thy Kingdom.

JANUARY THE FIRST.

Thou, O Lord, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. Is. 63: 16. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4: 12.

"Blessed be His glorious name" (Ps. 72: 19). "Thy name is as ointment poured forth" (Cant. 1: 3). Oh, that He this day would pour forth all His ointment upon us that, throughout the whole year, we might walk in the fragrance of that anointing, in the sanctifying power of that holy name! Oh that the divine power of the Holy Ghost, with which He is anointed "without measure" (Ps. 45: 8; John 3: 34; Acts 10: 38), might not only pour itself forth into our own hearts, but diffuse its life-giving incense over all the world, and not only to-day, but every day stream down upon us to fill, like spikenard, the whole house of our heart and life with its perfume! (John 12: 3). He is Father; He is Redeemer, a fatherly Redeemer, and a redeeming Father. As such the ancients knew Him and named Him, rejoiced in Him, praised

Him, and trusted in Him, before He was known and named to them as He is known and named to us: the glorious name Jesus Christ, God above all, blessed for ever. Should we not rejoice in Him, the corner-stone of our faith and life, our eternal hope, our love? His name is, indeed, a complete Bible, a book of God; a testament that contains old and new things; a depository in which all the treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge lie hidden; God's epistle that proclaims the whole plan of our salvation; a fountain, a well from which we may draw all we need for life and a God-like conversation. Let us enter the new year, confidently believing that everything in it shall prosper for us. Let us begin and end each day in the year, each hour in the day, with that name. Let us work and rest, watch and sleep, eat and drink, in that name. Let us do everything and suffer everything in that name. Let us abide in it forever. Amen!

Jesus! Name of wondrous love!
Name all other names above!
Name at which must every knee
Bow in deep humility.

Jesus! Only name that's given
Under all the mighty heaven,
Whereby man, to sin enslaved,
Bursts his fetters, and is saved.

Jesus! Name of wondrous love!
Human name of Him above!
Pleading only this we flee,
Helpless, O our God, to Thee.

JANUARY THE SECOND.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. Rev. 1: 8.

If Jesus is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, then let Him be not only your Alpha, but also your Omega. Begin not only with Jesus, but end also with Him; or rather, let Him finish that which He has

begun in you. There are many who remain standing at Alpha, who are satisfied with the rudiments, with the first letters in Christianity, with the first emotions, or even with good resolutions, with which, as the ancients said, "the road to hell is paved." The continuance in piety and the earnest practice thereof are wanting. (1 Tim. 4: 7. 8; 2 Tim. 3: 5).

How can Omega, the ending, be attained when one remains leisurely at the beginning? Nor must Alpha be overlooked. You must not try to reach the ending before you have learned Alpha, before a good foundation is laid, and a right beginning is made in and with Christ. (1 Cor. 3: 11). It is not in vain that Jesus proclaims Himself as Alpha and Omega. He wants to be all to you. Where once He has said Alpha, He will also say Omega; where He begins, He will sustain His cause unto victory. His Alpha is unto us a pledge that He will also be our Omega. My faith, be bold, and trust therein!

Jesus, my Truth, may Way,
My sure, unerring Light,
On Thee my feeble soul I stay,
Which Thou wilt lead aright.

My Wisdom and my Guide,
My Counsellor Thou art:
O, let me never leave Thy side
Nor from Thy paths depart.

Thou seest my feebleness,
Jesus, be Thou my Power,
My Help and Refuge in distress,
My Fortress and my Tower.

JANUARY THE THIRD.

Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehova is everlasting strength. Is. 26: 4. **Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.** 1 Pet. 1: 13.

Trust in the Lord! That does not mean, Fold your hands in your lap and be unconcerned about your salvation; but it does mean, Go to the work with unshaken

courage, and with unbounded confidence. The Lord is an invincible rock, an indomitable fortress, not only to Himself, but also to you. When you throw yourself into this fortress, His grace will keep you and strengthen you by his almighty power unto all things. Trust in grace alone! That does not mean, Do nothing yourself; let grace effect it; but it does mean, When you, with all possible zeal, are striving after salvation, do not rely upon yourself; trust not in yourself and in your own strength; but trust in that grace which never departs from you, and in which you can do all things; which grace, however, cannot save you apart from yourself, that is to say, unless you earnestly desire to be saved; for as you cannot do anything without it, neither can nor will it work in you apart from yourself.

Jesus, Thou art my Righteousness,
For all my sins were Thine;
Thy death hath bought of God my peace,
Thy life hath made Him mine.

Forever here my rest shall be,
Close to Thy bleeding side;
This all my hope and all my plea:
For me the Savior died.

My dying Savior and my God,
Fountain for guilt and sin,
Sprinkle me ever with Thy blood,
And cleanse, and keep me clean.

JANUARY THE FOURTH.

He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. Is. 40: 29-31.

Young people, brave beginners, who rely on themselves, and think they lack nothing; who caper and would leap over others, often fall pitifully to

their humiliation. On the other hand, he who feels himself weak and insignificant, must not grow weary nor despondent; the Lord is his strength. The strength of the Lord is made perfect in those who are weak, not in those who are strong. He gives sufficiency to those who realize their insufficiency; but those who feel sufficient in themselves He permits to sink. Therefore, do not lose courage, ye who realize and lament your own weakness; for the Lord tells you through His prophet, that in Him sufficient strength lies in readiness for you. Appropriate it in believing and constant prayer; He gives strength to the weary supplicants. O ye who are weary, come unto the God-given source of power, to Christ! He will revive you. Who is losing courage? The Lord is here and will strengthen. The Omnipotent, the Almighty, calls you. Will you not come to Him? Would you rather remain lying in your helplessness even when the All-powerful reaches forth His hand to you? Grasp it, and you shall be enabled to do all things through Him, who strengthens you.

Who shall dare excuse himself with his weakness when the Lord, the Almighty, offers him sufficient strength? Yea, whoever trusts in Him, though he were a worm in the dust, shall mount up as the eagle, in the strength of the Lord.

Come, ye weary sinners, come,
All who feel your heavy load:
Jesus calls His wanderers home;
Hasten to your pardoning God.

Come, ye guilty souls opprest,
Answer to the Savior's call:
"Come, and I will give you rest;
Come, and I will save you all."

Jesus, full of truth and love,
We thy gracious call obey:
Take our load of guilt away.
Faithful let Thy mercies prove,

Fain we would on Thee rely,
Cast on Thee our sins and care:

To Thine arms of mercy fly,
Find our lasting quiet there.

Lo, we come to Thee for ease:
True and gracious as Thou art,
Now our weary souls release,
Write forgiveness on our heart.

JANUARY THE FIFTH.

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord. Ps. 84: 31. My soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry, thirsty land, where no water is; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen Thee in the sanctuary. Ps. 63: 1-3.

He who has been in the courts of the Lord, tasted His nearness, drunk of His fulness, feels this thirst incessantly: without the Lord, the world is a dry and sterile waste. He who has beheld the sanctuary of the Lord, which He builds for Himself in believing souls, the power and glory which He reveals and imparts to all who draw near to Him, lies ever at His door, that he may enter as soon as it is opened; to behold the power and the glory of the Lord in His sanctuary. How beautiful is this sanctuary! But without, how miserable! In the courts of the Lord, in His sanctuary, one feels at home, but outside one feels as in a desert, as in a strange land. With ardent longing the soul seeks the sanctuary and feels blest as often as it finds it. Why are so many languishing, cold, and destitute? Because they do not seek the sanctuary of the Lord; because they do not long for His courts; because they do not lie at His door and wait for His grace. For that reason it is not opened unto them; for that reason they cannot enter and behold His power and glory. Oh, come; tarry no longer in the land where there is no water.

I love Thy Zion, Lord;
The house of Thine abode;
The church our best Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heav'nly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

JANUARY THE SIXTH.

Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. Is. 45: 22. For Thy mercy is great above the heavens: and Thy truth reacheth unto the clouds. Ps. 108: 4.

Here you see how universal is the grace of God. He invites all, from one end of the earth to the other; all may come; all are invited; all will be received. God would not call them all, if there were a single one whom He would not receive, a single one whom He had destined to perdition. According to His purpose and determination, all the ends of the earth should be saved. He who is not saved, excludes himself, and fails to obtain salvation, not because God will not save him, but because he will not suffer himself to be saved. He calls you; only come! Why are there still so many people who do not follow this gracious invitation? There ought no more to dwell on earth a soul who should not have thrown himself into God's open arms of grace long ago. Why does not one tell it to the other? Alas! if all men only knew how blessed God would like to make them, verily, they would all become Christians.

Oh, he embraces not only one nation with His loving and merciful arms, but all men from one end of the heavens to the other. How encompassing are His arms! Dear soul, do you not believe that there is room in His arms for you also? Grace. redemption and eternal salvation are prepared for all; His bosom is open to every human being who comes; he finds a kind reception and room enough and salvation enough, though all men should come. As far as the heavens reach, there is a path, a way, to the grace of God in Christ. As long as you journey beneath the heavens, and beneath the clouds, you are ever beneath the Heaven of Grace; so long does grace reach even to

you. While I see the heavens and the clouds, I yet behold grace, inviting, calling, saving. The heavens and the clouds declare unto me the grace of their God and of my God whenever I see them. Thus may you also declare to every human being that dwells beneath the heavens and the clouds that there is grace for him; that grace extends even unto him; and that it is adequate for him because it reaches as far as the heavens. Measure the heavens! Yet you have not measured grace, because it is greater than the heavens, as He who has created the heavens and who distributes grace, is greater than anything which He has created.

Weary of wandering from my God,
And now made willing to return,
I hear, and bow me to the rod;
For Thee, not without hope, I mourn;
I have an Advocate above,
A Friend before the throne of love.

O Jesus, full of truth and grace,
More full of grace than I of sin;
Yet once again I seek Thy face,
Open Thine arms and take me in!
And freely my backslidings heal
And love the faithless sinner still.

Thou knowest the way to bring me back,
My fallen spirit to restore;
Oh, for Thy truth and mercy's sake,
Forgive and bid me sin no more:
The ruins of my soul repair,
And make my heart a house of prayer.

THE SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Who then can be saved? Mat. 19: 25. **He that endureth to the end shall be saved.** Mat. 10: 22.

There are many who would be saved, but they will not do that which is required in order to be saved, namely, to endure in piety, and to walk in the grace vouchsafed to the end. They wish blessedness in Christ; but they also wish to be merry, or rich, or admired in

this world. Hence they may believe in Christ; but withal they love the world, thinking that they can find some joy and blessedness in both. But they will lose both and be eternally wretched. Perseverance is a blessing for which we must daily ask the Savior on our knees; for He only, who has called us unto salvation, can keep us and further us therein. Security, the false knowledge concerning the doctrine of grace without enduring therein, deceives many; they do not continue to live in Him who has called and awakened them. They return to their slumbers and dream that they still live, though they remain lying on the pillow of mere knowledge and twaddle; they do not continue in their first love. Awake, awake! Pray for this one thing, the holy fire of love, which burns forever, and is never extinguished.

My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise:
And hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

Oh, watch, and fight, and pray!
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor lay thine armor down;
Thine arduous work will not be done,
Till thou obtain the crown.

Fight on, my soul, till death
Shall bring thee to thy God!
He'll take thee at thy parting breath,
Up to His blest abode.

MONDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Is. 60: 1-3.

Though the greater part of the Jews would not give room for the fruits of the Gospel, but remained in their darkened condition, the Gospel, however, was not without fruit. It has been spread throughout the world, and instead of the blinded Jews, it has gathered the Gentiles. What Isaiah here says, has been fulfilled. For the Gentiles have become Christians and walk in Christ, the true light, by the right faith. Even kings, the most mighty on earth, have humbled themselves in faith.—The Jews persecuted the Christians and thought it would be very easy to destroy this poor and weak people. They did not see that thereby they only fanned the newly started fire and drove it out into the wide world. By their rage they only aided in fulfilling the words of the prophet. For by persecution the Christians were driven out into all the world, so that sons and daughters of the true Israel of God gathered around the true Light, which is come into the world. This is the masterpiece of God, that He can accomplish His will even through His enemies. When they rage and would destroy His Word and His people, they destroy themselves and must further God's Word and His glory. Thus were great numbers of the Gentiles converted by the apostles. They were before in the darkness which covered the earth; but now thy *"light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."* The Gospel is called our light because thereby we see and know God, ourselves and all things; but the light in the Gospel is He of whom John says, *"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."* (John 1: 4. 5). The Gospel is called "good news" because it sets forth and proclaims the goodness of God, God's holiness, God's glory and brightness. Thus says Paul in Tit. 2: 11, *The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.*

"The Lord thy God will be thy light."

The Lord grant that all we who are called Christians may prove ourselves to be true Christians through faith in the truth and sanctification of the Spirit.

Shine on the darkened and the cold,
Recall the wanderers to thy fold,
Unite those now who walk apart,
Confirm the weak and doubting heart.

TUESDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. Ps. 110: 1-4.

Oh, my Lord Jesus, how terrible it is that the prince of this world shall dwell in man and hold him captive through sin! I thank Thee from the depths of my heart that Thou hast made me meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light; that Thou hast delivered me out of the power of darkness and translated me into Thy Kingdom, by which I am saved and redeemed through Thy blood, and by which Thou hast entered into a new covenant with me. O Lord, grant that I may always remain steadfast therein and never lose Thy grace. Gather ever more souls into Thy Kingdom. Write us as Thy citizens in the book of Thy celestial city, yea, in Thy hands. Sustain us that we may remain forever in Thy Kingdom, who in baptism have had our names written in Thy book, entered into covenant and compact with Thee and promised Thee faithfulness. O come, Thou King of grace, into my heart and quiet all unrest there. Fill my life with Thy grace that Thou mayest in heaven fill me with Thy eternal glory. Give unto Thy people power, strength and victory over all their spiritual and temporal enemies and make us partakers of the glory of Thy Kingdom, when Thou comest in Thy great power and glory, and all the holy angels with Thee. Fulfill then even on us these Thy joyful words, "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," and,

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Let me be Thine forever,
Thou faithful God and Lord,
May I forsake Thee never,
Nor wander from Thy word;
Keep me from error's mazes,
Lord, give me constancy,
And I will sing Thy praises
Through all eternity.

WEDNESDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Tit. 3: 4-7.

Behold, dear soul, how the Holy Ghost joins together as inseparable, "kindness," "love" and "mercy," which are revealed to us in Christ Jesus, which shine for us as a heavenly light; holy baptism by which we have been regenerated unto a lively hope; by which we have been endowed with the glory of adoption, entitled to the expectation of heaven, yea, by which we have put on Christ in Him and by Him being made to "sit together in heavenly places" (1 Pet. 1: 3; Gal. 3: 27; Eph. 2: 6); the Holy Ghost who is shed on us; with whom we are sealed; who dwells in us; who daily renews, leads, sanctifies, comforts and guides us and keeps us in the faith; that righteousness which we have in the grace of Christ Jesus, and finally the heritage of eternal life. Consider now your Christian heart, and you shall find that by the grace of God you are fashioned according thereto. Say out of the depths of your heart, "I am by the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus a baptized, regenerated and renewed Christian; I am thus according to the testimony of the Holy Ghost an heir of eternal life. This is a faithful saying." You may, perhaps, object, "True,

the Word of God gives me hope of eternal life, but when I consider my many weaknesses, the enticements of the world and the power of Satan, I often become despondent and my hope is much shaken." I answer, It is no bad sign in the believers that they are full of care in matters appertaining to eternal salvation. They are thereby prompted to strive the more earnestly to enter in through the straight gate. But that such fears may not degenerate into doubt, you must ever keep the beautiful words before your eyes which the all-good God has intended for us as a cordial under such circumstances, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10: 27. 28).

Holy Jesus! every day
Keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past,
Bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide,
Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

THURSDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark 16: 16. **For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.** 1 Thes. 5: 9. **Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?** Heb. 1: 14.

Salvation is the desire of all the children of God. There is nothing which is more in their hearts than this thought and these words, Oh, that I may be saved! Salvation will certainly be ours if we only remain steadfast in the true faith in Christ and solicitous as to our salvation; for it does not rest in our hand, but in the hand of God by whose power we are kept unto salvation. Comfort yourselves with such thoughts, ye who are unfortunate in this world. If ye pious souls seem to be the most unfortunate in this life, ye are nevertheless happy. (1 Pet. 3: 14). But the children of the world should

also consider what they despise and lose, namely, the salvation of their souls. What shall it help us if we have everything else but lose salvation? "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Mat. 16: 26). No one wishes to lose anything which is dear to him. Shall a man deal with his soul in such a thoughtless manner that he must needs lose it? The old adage remains true: "Possessions lost, nothing is lost; courage lost, the half is lost; soul and salvation lost, all is lost." "Therefore hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Rev. 3: 11).

Jerusalem, thou city fair and high,
Would God I were in thee!
My longing heart to thee would fly!
It will not stay with me;
Far over vale and mountain,
Far over field and plain,
It hastens to seek its Fountain
And quit this world of pain.

FRIDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Is. 44: 21. 22. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. Is. 45: 22. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Is. 55: 1.

The worship which God expects from us is that we regard Him as our God, believe in Him, trust in Him, have our pleasure and refreshment in Him, and enjoy Him in an intimate and close fellowship. From this it follows that we love, praise, worship, adore and glorify Him. All this the merciful God demands not so much for His own sake as for ours inasmuch as we thereby become more and more fit to draw near unto Him, and enjoy Him all the

more. For as it is His pleasure to do us good and make us partakers of His perfection, so it is the most acceptable worship we can render to Him that we seek our good in Him only, and that we thus heartily drink out of the inexhaustible, living and eternal Fountain; enrich ourselves out of His treasures and abundance; walk in His light, become righteous by His righteousness, sanctified by His sanctification, joyful by His joy, and peaceful by His peace. From this we also learn why the holy Scriptures call it a divine service to suffer, to praise God or to preach the Gospel, to love our neighbor, to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, to keep ourselves unspotted of the world. By these things we serve God and demonstrate that we are His children.

And grant me, Lord, to do,
With ready heart and willing,
Whate'er Thou shalt command,
My calling here fulfilling;
And do it when I ought,
With all my strength, and bless
The work I thus have wrought,
For Thou must give success.

SATURDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life. Prov. 6: 23. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Rom. 15: 4. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. Acts 20: 32.

I praise Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast given unto me Thy holy Word, in which Thou teachest me Thy will. O Father, hadst Thou not therein revealed Thyself, I would, as the heathen, have remained in my foolishness, and my heart, which is without understanding, would have continued in darkness. Alas, Lord, before Thee do I complain that I have not sufficiently appreciated this Thy grace. I have not been constant in searching Thy Word and in learning

Thy will. And how slow am I in living up to what I know? O Thou eternal Goodness, forgive me this sin. Let me remain in the sound Word of Jesus and know the truth, that it may set me free from the service of sin. Thy Word is a hammer; let it crush my hard heart; it is a light, let it expel the darkness; it is a fire, let it warm my cold heart, and consume everything which is contrary to Thy will. Cleanse my heart which is so full of worldly thoughts, that it may hear Thy Word, keep it, and bear fruit in patience by Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord.

Thanks we give and adoration
For Thy Gospel's joyful sound.
May the fruits of Thy salvation
In our hearts and lives abound.
May Thy presence
With us evermore be found.

MONDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. Ps. 65: 4.

Who shall dwell in "the courts" of the Lord? The chosen to whose heart Jesus has come, whom His grace has drawn, who constantly feel His nearness and taste His goodness—these are, verily, satisfied with the blessings of His house and with the sacred things of His temple. For we ourselves are His "temple," says the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 3: 16; Heb. 3: 6), if we abide in Him and persevere in faith and ardent love. How can we lack comfort when He dwells in us as in His house? Who should not yearn for these courts of the Lord, which are so full of the riches of grace and comfort? Who should not in all faithfulness remain therein when grace has placed him there? He who once has tasted how good the Lord is, who has once perceived His presence—oh, may he also remain in Him and no more seek any comfort outside of Him! For as soon as he tries this, and the Lord alone is not sufficient for

him, then is he shown out of the courts of the Lord. The rich consolation, which flows only in the Lord's house, which is enjoyed only in His holy temple, in intercourse with Him, ceases and dries up outside of the "courts of the Lord." He becomes wretched and miserable, poor, blind and naked, even though he imagines himself to be "rich and increased with goods, and having need of nothing" (Rev. 3: 17).

In the land of light and love;
Pleasant are Thy courts below,
In this land of sin and woe.
O, my spirit longs and faints
For the converse of Thy saints,
For the brightness of Thy face,
For Thy fulness, God of grace!

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. Ps. 5: 3. For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory; no good things will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Ps. 84: 11. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing is his wings. Mal. 4: 2.

Early in the morning, in your youth, you should consecrate yourself to the Lord, and each day, early, lift yourself unto Him. You can never come too early unto Him. He is up and about before you are, to hear your voice and to join His heart with your heart. The earlier and the heartier you seek His face in the morning, the more gloriously and the more powerfully will He arise as your sun and appear as your shield, dispel night and darkness from your soul, and make your heart fruitful in faith and charity. The gardeners usually expose their plants and herbs to the morning sun. Permit the Sun of righteousness, which daily arises for you, to shine down into the garden of your soul. May you early accept his salutary and exhilarating rays in your heart! The sun arises every day without any effort on your part. It passes over you and your garden without your

guiding it. You need only to open your heart; at least, do not close it, but with an open and yearning heart expose yourself to its influence and it shall enlighten, revive and illumine you. That which especially is delightful in regard to this Sun of the souls is that he never sets and that at all seasons of the year he shines equally warm and clear; in the North as well as in the South; in the winter as well as in the summer. He knows of no setting and of no clouds; for although there are such and they hide the sun from you, yet the mists ascend solely from your own marshes. He who never takes his eyes from the Sun, will never be forsaken by him.

Sun of my soul, Thou Savior dear,
It is not night if Thou be near;
O may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. Eph. 5: 14. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. 1 Thes. 5: 6.

There is nothing which the Christian, even the most zealous, should fear more than to fall asleep. The higher the flame of love ascends, the quicker it becomes extinguished if one does not place new fuel upon it. The sun does not shine for him who is asleep. He who does not awake, nor shake off his drowsiness, nor open his eyes, will not be enlightened by Christ, who is the light. Watchfulness and soberness must be renewed daily, otherwise we shall become like the others in this world who are dead, who have never been awakened from their sleep and misery; we shall receive the same reward as they will receive when they are found sleeping by Him who cometh "like a thief in the night." Paul wrote the above words to Christians in Ephesus and Thessalonica: they were awaked and pardoned, and he gave them much praise.

But even in the best congregation, and among the most zealous, some are always found who have a great inclination to sleep, who ever need to be awakened lest they slumber into death. Many dream so vividly in their sleep that they consider themselves awake and alive. They become angry when one would awaken them. They lie in deepest slumber; only God can awaken them by loud calls or hard blows. May God awaken us all, whether our slumber be light or heavy! For the slumbering virgins sleep away the wedding feast. They come too late—after the door is closed.

Watch! 'tis your Lord's command;
And while we speak, He's near.
Mark the first signal of His hand,
And ready all appear.

O happy servant he,
In such a posture found!
He shall His Lord with rapture see,
And be with honor crowned.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Let not your heart be troubled. John 14: 1. **I will turn their mourning into joy, and wil comfort them, and make them rejoice from their sorrow.** Jer. 31: 13. **As many as I love I rebuke and chasten.** Rev. 3: 19.

He who believes that Jesus loves him, has no reason to mourn because of any disaster or suffering with the exception of sin; sin is the greatest disaster and suffering and truly deserves mourning. Yet even the "mourning" because of sin should not lead to despair, but to faith; for the sinner, as soon as he mourns because of his sins, may rest assured that Jesus, the Friend fo sinners, loves him, seeks him, will receive and accept him, pardon and save him. Should not that cause joy? Besides, nothing of a discouraging nature befalls us since sorrow is sent us in love and wisdom by Him who strikes only that He may heal, and slays only that He may give life. These are chastenings of pure love,

which should drive us nearer to Him, and unite us closer with Him. We are bad children. We do not follow God and His Word; therefore He must bring us home with the rod. If we come at once, and realize His love, the chastisement ceases at once. Your mourning should therefore not darken to you the love of Jesus, for in that case it becomes a black cloud of hell. If you are mourning, then think: Jesus loves me and seeks me; for that reason He chastises me. I am not close enough to Him, therefore will He draw me closer to Himself. He will love me more than I have hitherto permitted Him to do.

I cannot call affliction sweet;
And yet 'twas good to bear:
Affliction brought me to Thy feet,
And I found comfort there.

Then, O my soul, to Jesus flee;
To Him thy woes reveal!
His eye alnoe thy wounds can see,
His hand alone can heal.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity. Ps. 141: 9. O Lord, thou shalt preserve them. Ps. 12: 7. And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the Lord. And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible. Jer. 15: 20. 21.

Though sin, or the flesh, or the world, or Satan, or all these wicked and proud forces together, assail you, lay snares and spread nets before you, you shall, nevertheless, be preserved if you only will; you shall be snatched out and rescued by the hand of the Lord. But you must be in His hand and not fight against the enemies with your own fists. You must, as it were, take your heart in your hand and bring it to the Savior, place it in His hand, let it remain therein, and every

day and hour see whether it still remains there or not. If your heart rests in the hand of the Lord; if you constantly take your heart to Him and place it in His hand, then shall you stand firmly against all the onslaughts of the enemy, unconquerable in all temptations; even your worst enemy, Satan, shall be unable to destroy your soul, it being in the hand of the Lord. Outside of that hand you are like a ball to the world, the devil and the flesh; you will re-enter the old course which you learned to abhor long ago, and once more be overcome by the enemy, whom you think you have conquered and become a slave of your former sins. In the hand of the Lord you are unassailable It holds you in a secret and wonderful way, even when you seem to succumb. If you are already in the claws of the devil, grasp the hand of the Lord; it shall snatch you out and deliver you from the powers of the enemies.

If God Himself be for me,
I may a host defy;
For when I pray, before me
My foes confounded fly.
If Christ, the Head, befriend me,
If God be my support,
The mischief they intend me
Shall quickly come to naught.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

And my people are bent to backsliding from me. Hos. 11: 7. **Bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors.** Is. 46: 8. **And when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.** Dan. 12: 7.

The dispersion of the people of Israel is an illustration of all dispersed souls that are driven out of the promised land of peace, who wander about excluded from their own, without temple and without sanctuary, without High-priest and without sacrifice, and without their King. They seek rest but find it not. But if they return from their backslidings and seek the Savior in the

sanctuary, all that they have been promised will be fulfilled and accomplished. The Lord will dwell in them. Do not lose sight of this sign, ye who search the times; do not make a miscalculation with many figures. One thing only is needful. Bring all your figures to this One and remain with Him; then the day has already dawned in you and you will not miss that which is to come. He who is not faithful in things present, who shall give him the things to come? He who does not use with heart and soul that which he has, who will give him that which is to come? That which he has is taken from him. Indifference, sanctimonious talk without sincerity of heart, drives away the Spirit of grace. He always withdraws when we do not show reverence in dealing with sacred things, when we only talk about what we ought to do, and not doing His will.

When all with awe shall stand around
To hear their doom allotted,
O may my worthless name be found
In the Lamb's book emblotted!
Grant me a firm, unshaken faith;
For Thou, my Savior, by Thy death,
Hast purchased my salvation.

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 2 Cor. 13: 5.

The Corinthians stood in the faith, were apostolic Christians, brought to faith and instructed therein by the Apostle himself; nevertheless, he counsels them to make this examination and to continue therein with all earnestness. We are more secure than were the Corinthians. Should we not rather ask ourselves each day: Is Christ in my heart? or is He only on my tongue? only in my head? in Bible passages and memorized words? If Christ, as the good tree, be planted in your heart, you will know Him by the fruits. Where Christ is, there are also His mind and life. Where there is faith in Christ, there are also the fruits of faith

and charity. Where Christ dwells in the heart, there the devil and the world are ousted; for Christ and Belial, God and the world, cannot agree in the same habitation. If you have not the mind of Christ, a Christ-like conversation and the fruits of faith, then have you neither Christ nor faith in Christ. If you have Him not, the world and Satan will not let your heart remain empty; the world and Satan are in you. But you should give them notice to leave their habitation in you this very day. Not only that, but you should without hesitation or consideration cast them and their whole brood out of doors.

Up, my soul, gird thee with power,
Watch! to prayer betake thee;
Lest the sudden evil hour
Unawares o'ertake thee.
Satan's prey
Soon are they,
Who, with best endeavor,
Watch not, pray not, ever.

MONDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. Mine eyes are ever toward the Lord. Ps. 25: 1. 15. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? Ps. 42: 2. If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. John 7: 37.

If you do not find the Savior in your soul and do not feel His sacred presence, give yourself no rest until you find Him. Seek comfort nowhere else but in Him. It would be a shame if you could so easily dispense with Him without whom you can find no bliss. It would be a sin to be without Him and to cast about for another. Like God's people in the old covenant, do not tire of seeking Him faithfully when at times He hides Himself from you. You are not forsaken by Him. He only hides Himself to test your desire and longing for Him. If you tire, if you cease to seek Him, to long for Him, you offend Him in such wise that He

departs still farther from you and in such a way that you must still longer be without His blessed presence. Where is your desire, your longing for Him? Does your inner eye constantly look to Him? Does your soul thirst after Him, after the living God? Are you satisfied with a mere cold conception of God and Christ? Do you seek to detect the life and power of God and Christ in your heart? Do you strive to attain rest and quiet for your mind, to enter into the sanctuary of your soul, that you may be seen before the face of God and behold Him so far as that is possible here below? Thirst, long and yearn for Him as did David, as did Asaph; then, like they, you shall know the living God, yea, know Him in a higher degree than they knew Him.

Jesus, priceless Treasure,
Source of purest pleasure,
Truest friend to me!
Oh, how long I've panted,
And my heart hath fainted,
Thirsting, Lord, for Thee!
Thine I am,
Thou spotless Lamb,
I will suffer naught to hide Thee,
Naught I ask beside Thee.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. Cant. 3: 1. 2.

Blessed is the soul that thus seeks the Savior, that is kindled by such a longing for Him, that yearns for Him night and day, that cannot sleep soundly when it does not have Him; that must arise to seek Him in "the streets" and "the broad ways" of the City of God, in all the ways of the inner life. Those souls are without doubt most noble whom the Savior thus trains in seeking; whose eyes are holden so that they do not see Him nor know Him, although He walks with

them; who have before been used to His sweet communion, but have now for a long time been unable to partake of the comfort of His presence as often and as soon as they wished; who have therefore been troubled by outward tribulation and inward doubt, fear and temptation. The more He hides Himself from them, the more intense becomes their longing for Him. The farther He seems to withdraw from them, the more earnestly do they seek Him. For they know that it is only a trial of their love, a confirmation of their faith. They are convinced that He cannot in earnest leave them; that He cannot hate any soul that loves Him or flee from any soul that seeks Him. If He does withdraw from us, it is only that He may draw us closer to Himself, that we may the more penetrate into our inner man. His withdrawal from us should only bring us nearer to Him, and remove that which still lies between us and Him; tear down the partition and give Him to us for ever.

Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to Thee; here, Lord, abide!
Let me Thine inner presence feel,
Thy grace and love in me reveal;
Thy Holy spirit guide us on,
Until our glorious goal be won!
Eternal praise and fame
We offer to Thy name.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth — — — and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity, that I procure unto it. Jer. 33: 6. 9.

Your Savior will not only forgive you, but He will also comfort you; nor will He only comfort you, but He will also "cure" your imperfections if it be a matter of importance to you and if you earnestly and constantly seek such healing in prayer. Yea, He will give you so much goodness, so much heavenly peace and un-

speakable joy and happiness, that you shall be astonished and hardly able to believe it. Therefore, do not place any barriers in the way of His love. Permit Him to bestow upon you all the goodness which He has intended for you. Do not be satisfied with the fact that He has forgiven you your sins of the past; suffer yourself to be cured radically, and let your soul be filled with the heavenly good things in Christ. He who bore with you so long when you were in your sins will, after the remission of your sins, elevate you to the enjoyment of all the blessings of salvation. When a pardoned soul permits the Savior and His Spirit to work freely in his heart and does not by thoughtlessness or distraction place obstructions in His way, he receives many evidences of grace and heavenly blessings. But most souls desire only forgiveness of sins and not cure from their sins, not health to the soul. Without this, however, they will soon lose the other. For if your sins be actually and truly forgiven, your heart is cured so that you have no more desire to commit sin.

Left to ourselves we shall but stray;
O lead us in the narrow way,
With wisest counsel guide us,
And give us steadfastness, that we
May henceforth truly follow Thee,
Whatever woes betide us:
Heal Thou gently
Hearts now broken,
Give some token
Thou art near us,
Whom we trust to light and cheer us.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Ps. 84: 1. 4. 10. **Our conversation is in heaven.** Phil. 3: 20.

God's "house," God's "tabernacles," and God's "courts" are not only in heaven, among the souls made

perfect, and among the angels, but also here below, in believing and pardoned souls, in the most holy of your heart. When we betake ourselves there, and remain there, we are His house and tabernacles of peace. For we find God, and in Him heaven, and we walk in Him as in heaven. If we do not find Him at once, but wait for His presence, we stand in the courts of the Lord, and although it oftentimes is hard to remain here because of the draught, yet this is better than to divert ourselves among the tents of the wicked and run after the amusements of the senses and of the world. For when we dwell in His courts, and continue to wait for Him, He will surely come and take us into His tabernacles. The trying suspense through hours, days and years, is then rewarded in a moment. You will praise the Lord and sing with David, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!"

Yes, my God, I come before Thee,
Come Thou also down to me;
Where we find Thee and adore Thee
There a heaven on earth must be.
To my heart, O enter Thou,
Let it be Thy temple now.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me. Cant. 1: 5. 6.

The true Church of Christ, as well as the real children of God are "black" and uncomely in the eyes of the world, partly because of their lowly estate; partly because they are few in number against the great multitude of the world, and partly because of the tribulations that befall them. But the more "comely" and beautiful is their inner form in the eyes of God. Outwardly they resemble the poor tents of the Kedarines in desolate Arabia, but inwardly they are, because of the gifts of the Holy

Ghost and His blessings, as glorious as Solomon's curtains that were wrought in gold. Therefore take no offence at the outward blackness of Christ's bride. She has become so tanned and swarthy from the heat of persecutions and temptations that she resembles one "afflicted, tossed with the tempest, and not comforted" (Is. 54: 11). Nor is she vexed by unbelievers, Jews, Gentiles and Turks alone, but by the children of her own mother, that is, by such as would be within the pale of the Church. True Christians must always suffer all kinds of outrage by false brethren and merely outward members, who are ever more powerful than they are. But it makes them beautiful and glorious in the eyes of God, who washes and cleanses them so that they resemble their Lord and King who, although the most despised of all, and outwardly not possessed of any beauty, yet was the most beautiful among the children of men.

In fierce temptation's darkest hour,
Save me from sin and Satan's power;
Tear every idol from Thy throne,
And reign, my Savior, reign alone.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. Joel 2: 12. If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods from among you. 1 Sam. 7: 3. Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God. Jer. 31: 18.

There are many awakened souls, but few who are converted with all their heart. You have once heard the awakening voice and have been aroused from sleep; you have prayed and wept; you have been moved and comforted, and you have been very pious for some time; but your zeal and attachment to the Lord have abated. In order to reassure yourself, you still continue in outward things, such as prayer, the reading of God's Word, the singing of sacred songs and church going; but your heart clings to the world, to money, to honor among men. It is still given to anger or

envy or other sinful inclinations and passions. The childlike intercourse with God has become strange and difficult. You have retained the old idols or you have taken them out again, given them a different coloring, or hung a different cloak about them. You are not converted. Make haste and be saved! Pray, "Turn Thou to me, Lord, and I shall be turned." That you are in truth "turned" you will be able to determine from the fact that the living God or Christ dwells in your heart; that His mind is imprinted in your heart; that the idols of selfishness, sinful ambition, vainglory and covetousness, are overthrown; and that faith, love, humility, kindness, faithfulness, patience, as the true fruits of repentance, have succeeded them.

Though I have grieved Thy Spirit, Lord,
His help and comfort still afford;
And let me now come near Thy throne,
To plead the merits of Thy Son.

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily while it is called To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. 3: 12. 13.

The Apostle found it necessary to give this warning to the first Christians who had been awakened and led by him or by other apostles of the Lord. How much more necessary, then, is it not for us! Alas! how easy it is to backslide, to become lukewarm and at last unsusceptible to all the emotions of grace, which little by little leads to hardening of heart. Nothing is more treacherous than sin. It easily deceives him who may have renounced it, but not completely; who does not constantly fear it and does not possess his heart in humility and cling to the Lord in a childlike manner. Evil is easily hidden in the heart and makes it unbelieving, so that it backslides from the living God and remains hanging to the dead letter in forms and in habitual outward exer-

cises. But the living God, Christ and His Spirit, His peace and His presence, have departed from the heart. What shall become of such a Christ-less and ungodly heart? Another enters in who brings with him seven others who are more wicked than himself. Why does Paul use the words, "from the living God"? Because God is a dead God to us if He does not live within us. God lives; but He is not living to you unless you feel His life, His nature, His Spirit, and His power within you. You possess then only the idols of the spiritless letter and of the empty word. This is a result of the deceitfulness of sin. If God and Christ dwell not in you, sin will most willingly let you retain a dead God upon the tongue and a heart without spirit; then sin is allowed free scope in your heart. But the reverse should be the case: sin must be mortified in you that Christ may live in you. If not, you have departed from the living God, and your religious practices become empty idols that harden your heart.

Help me to watch and pray,
And on Thyself rely,
Steadfast to walk in Christ's dear way
And God to glorify.

MONDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

The serpent beguiled me. Gen. 3: 13. **Deceive not yourselves.** Jer. 37: 9. **Let no man deceive himself.** 1 Cor. 3: 18. **Lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.** Col. 2: 4.

Are you better, wiser, and more secure than was Eve in Paradise? Yet she was beguiled. If the Serpent prevailed over man to beguile him in his innocent paradisical state, why should he not prevail over you who are born and trained in sin? Therefore, pay close attention to the confession of your mother Eve concerning herself. How many wicked thoughts and fancies are awakened in your heart that may deceive you! How many sophistries in your corrupt mind! How many apparently good suggestions are made by friends or ene-

mies! For this reason the prophets, and the apostles, as well as the experience of all pious men, give you this warning: Be on your guard and remain in Him who is made unto you the wisdom of God. He who clings in a childlike manner to Him; who relies not on himself, but who at every beginning, every action, looks to Him and undertakes nothing without Him, shall not be deceived, not even by the wily Serpent. For Jesus can, and He will, crush his head, set at naught his cunning and power, and deliver us from all his snares. But he who does not firmly hold fast to Him who is the Head, will soon relax, and his first zeal will grow cold. The world, Satan, and lukewarm friends, will gladly show him that his first zeal was overdone and his first love for Christ eccentric. This he readily believes, because he has already taken counsel with his own flesh and blood and can no longer distinguish between their voice and that of the Holy Spirit. Let no man deceive you! Remember Eve! Remember Lot's wife! The first one was deceived by a small desire, the latter by an inquisitive glance. From small actions of unfaithfulness spring great and terrible sins. Let no man deceive you.

Father, fix my soul on Thee;
Every evil let me flee:
Nothing want beneath, above,
Happy in Thy precious love.

TUESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

These are wells without water, — — clouds that are carried with a tempest; — — for when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure — — those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 2 Pet. 2: 17-20.

Even the most copious wells may become empty and dry; even the most pious Christians become ungodly. He who had escaped may again be taken captive, and

"entangled" in the old ways. Peter proves this by examples from his own time. Oh, that we may not be such examples and make like experiences! At least, do not you present such an example, dear reader. Do not become secure, and do not glory in yourself. Rely not upon yourself. Rely only on Him who upholds all things by the word of His power. He will keep you if you abide in Him. There are, alas! too many who have the pretension and the appearance of "wells," yet they do not give a drop of the water of life; words enough, but no reality, no unction, no spirit. Beware of such wells! Why will you tarry by them? You must die of thirst if you do not seek the well of living water in Him who has said, "He that believeth on me, of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7: 38). Where these rivers of life do not flow, you must not seek to quench your thirst, providing you know the spring from experience. If you do, you are a well without water yourself, and will fall back to "the pollutions of the world," be "tangled" in its meshes and become worse than you were before. But if you earnestly desire to be saved, it is within your power. The well is near, and open to all who thirst and desire to come and drink. If Jesus be in you, you have within you that river of life which never runs dry, which never lacks water. Abide, therefore, in Him, and let Him abide in you. Then you shall not be a well without water; your well will always give abundant water where you and yours may daily quench their thirst.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,—
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within;
Thou of life the Fountain art,
Freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Awake O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits: I am come into my garden, my sister, my sponse. Cant. 4: 16; 5: 1.

Christ's true, living church, as well as every true Christian, is God's pleasure-garden, which Christ has planted and made fertile. He waters it with the living water of the Spirit. It is enclosed, compassed round about with divine protection. With reference to its internal condition, it is hidden and unknown to the men of this world. Oftentimes the soul cries out, "Come, Holy Spirit!" At times the Spirit will punish and chastise like the cold northwind, and anon will warm, revive and comfort like the mild southwind and His precious shrubs, repentance, faith and love, with all their fruits, grow exuberantly. Yea, the soul sighs for the presence of the gardener when it misses Him, and then He comes and visits His garden, its heart, and blesses and attends it properly. Now, how is it with your garden? What does your gardener find when He comes? Do you love Him? Do you desire His visitation? Does the wind blow upon your "garden"? Do your herbs drip? Do you meet your well beloved, the only gardener of His kind, with holy longings and with hearty love, a heartfelt desire to please Him? Do all flowers and all desires in your soul open and turn toward Him? If He sees this in you, oh, how often He will visit His garden! How carefully He will attend to it! In what glorious condition He will keep it!

Blest are the pure in heart,
For they shall see our God;
The secret of the Lord is theirs,
Their soul is Christ's abode.

THURSDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law. Ps. 94: 12. **But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.** 1 Cor. 11: 32.

Is there any child that does not need chastisement? What a blessing it is when the Lord does not permit us to pursue our own paths, but places Himself in our way; disciplines us; fences in the wrong path with the thorny hedge of trials, humiliations, afflictions or persecutions, so that we are unable to withdraw from Him, and become blinded and hardened, but must seek Him and remain with Him! What a blessing it is that He deprives us of all consolation from without, and knocks every staff of support out of our hands, that we may seek our consolation and help in Him alone! All God's saints have thanked him more for chastisements, afflictions and trials, than for joys and blessings. Some day we also shall thank Him for the rod, even though we cannot do so now, because we do not yet understand. Without chastisement and temptation none can be acceptable to God, none learn fully to understand God's Word. Chastisement and temptation are also a key to the Scriptures and open many of God's mysteries to us which we would not otherwise know.

Dear Refuge of my weary soul,
On Thee, when sorrows rise,
On Thee, when waves of trouble roll,
My fainting hope relies.

FRIDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation. Ps. 62: 1. **Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him.** Ps. 37: 7. **The Lord was not in the earthquake.... not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.** 1 Kings 19: 11. 12.

The image of the sun is not reflected in the water except when it is quiet and smooth. So with God

in the soul. There are pious men who in their prayers have so much concerning which to speak to God, that God cannot speak to them because they do not give Him time to do so. They do not wait for an answer. They have so much to say to God that He cannot say anything to them. One word that God speaks to you is better than a thousand that you speak to Him. To sit at His feet like Mary, and to bring your uneasy, turbulent heart at rest before His face that it may receive His deep and sublime impression; to seek His face and rejoice in His presence, is a thousand times better than to give yourself much to do like Martha. You cannot discover the "still, small voice" in which Elijah found the Lord, in your heart; you can neither perceive the Lord in you, nor can you rejoice in His presence, if it storm in you or the wild fire of passion flash in you. Conceive the thought that you and your Savior are alone in the chamber of your heart. Shut out the world, not only from your room, but from your heart. Bring all disorderly emotions to rest in your heart; then the Spirit of God shall come in a still small voice, and the Lord shall be seen in His holy temple.

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless;
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His word, and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

SATURDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

And Moses alone shall come near the Lord; but they shall not come nigh, neither shall the people go up with him. Ex. 24: 2. The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him. Hab. 2: 20. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord. Zech. 2: 13.

He who would really "come near the Lord," must not come with a distracted heart. Like Moses, the heart must alone ascend the mountain of the Lord for

prayer. Let Aaron, the elders and the people, that is, all that might disturb our confidential intercourse with the Savior, remain far below, at the foot of the mountain. The Lord wants the soul alone and separate from all else that He may write His living law in the heart, not on tables of stone, but on tables of flesh. If Moses had to be alone and secluded to receive the stony, mortifying law, how much more, then, must the soul be separated from all else when it draws near to God and its Savior to receive the life-giving Spirit, to let the law which quickeneth be written in the heart and mind. If God, Christ, shall write this law in your soul, you must be quiet, and your soul uncontaminated by anything else. Every unquiet emotion in your heart hinders God in His sacred writing; disturbs the gentle speaker so that He cannot communicate anything to your soul. Let all base thoughts and all worthless wishes; all worldly desires; let the whole world, let everything remain far away, down there in the valley of forgetfulness, and come to the Lord with a disciple-heart that only listens, receives, and lets its inner emptiness be filled.

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,
But as Thou dwell'st with Thy disciples, Lord,
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come, not to sojourn, but abide with me.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

But let a man examine himself. 1 Cor. 11: 28. **Let every man prove his own work.** Gal. 6: 4. **I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness.** 1 Chron. 29: 17.

To neglect daily self-examination results in much injury and misfortune to the pious. If we do not constantly watch ourselves with a searching eye, we do not know ourselves nor our depravity. The heart feels no want, and without want no need of prayer, no incentive to humility. It is not bowed down and does not pray, at least not earnestly and importunately. Many evil inclinations steal into the heart

and take a seat in the heart. We speak words without power; we glory in grace without using it, without being chastised by it and without denying worldly lusts and living "soberly, righteously and godly" (Tit. 2: 12). Present yourself often before the all-seeing eye just as you are, and say from the depths of your soul, "Lord, all my desire is before Thee; and my groaning is not hid from Thee." (Ps. 38: 9). Examine yourself; otherwise the Lord will try you and chastise you with a heavy rod. Let the eyes that penetrate all things, as flames of fire, often look into the hidden recesses of your heart. Do not be afraid; whatsoever you reveal unto Him will not harm you; but whatsoever you hide from Him, and from yourself, will become an insidious poison and will at last be fuel to the fire that shall burn you; for impenitence always results in severe judgment. Upright souls are healed, comforted, cleansed, strengthened and blessed by the Lord. Be upright lest you would be judged.

My soul lies humbled in the dust,
And owns Thy dreadful sentence just;
Look down, O Lord, with pitying eye,
And save the soul condemned to die.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Rom. 8: 35.

Who among us can in truth repeat these words of the Apostle? Who among us is so full of the love of Christ that he endures, I will not say fire and sword, anguish and tribulation; but who endures patiently an ordeal calling for self-denial, a small injustice, a sharp word, or a loss? Who is so strong in love that he can bear such things for Christ's sake and remain in love of the Savior, in love to friends and to enemies, so that nothing in his heart can separate him from the love of Christ? Do not these beautiful words become a lie in our mouth when we have no power in

our heart; when we do not demonstrate their truth in our conduct? There are many who, perhaps, could better endure great sufferings and trials because of their love for Christ than bear the small trials that daily vex them. It seems to be more difficult to remain in the love of Christ during daily trials than during great persecutions and severe sufferings. We must beseech the Savior for strength to endure both, and seek power and endurance from Him. The love which God, through His Holy Spirit, has poured out into our hearts, can overcome everything. This love does not permit anything to separate it from its fountain any more than heat can be separated from fire, or light and warmth from the sun. Fancied love, which consists in words only, is unable to conquer anything; it can not be separated from Christ because it is not in Him: it is only an imagination and a self-delusion. It can not die, because it does not live; and for that reason it can not endure and bear.

Give me a calm and thankful heart,
From every murmur free;
The blessings of Thy grace impart,
And let me live to Thee.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? 2 Kings 10: 15. How canst thou say, I love thee, when thine heart is not with me? Judg. 16: 15.

These two questions men have asked men. How much more, then, can and will the Lord ask thus? If the disreputable Delilah demands the heart of Samson that she may entice him and kill him; if John demands of Jonadab that his heart be right before giving him his hand and permitting him to enter his chariot, should not the Lord, your Savior, desire your heart, and demand that it be right, that it always be with him, in order that He may bestow upon you life and the eternal communion of His heart? Without your heart, He can not be to you Jesus, a Savior. How can He bless your heart when you keep it from Him, when it is not with Him?

If your heart does not cling to Him like a burr to a garment, like a child to its mother's breast, it is impossible for you to receive life and power, peace and salvation from His heart. Heart to heart, heart in heart; thus would the Savior have it. We are assured that His heart is always turned unto us. Where is ours? He cries, "O soul, is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? How canst thou say, 'I love Thee,' when thine heart is not with me but seeketh distraction in other and irrelevant things?" "O Lord, try my reins and my heart" (Ps. 26: 2). "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies" (Ps. 119: 36).

Let every thought, and work, and word,
To Thee be ever given:
Till life shall be Thy service, Lord,
And death the gate to heaven.

MONDAY AFTER SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Hezekiah clave to the Lord. 2 Kings 18: 6. **My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me.** Ps. 63: 8. **He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.** 1 Cor. 6: 17. **But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord, God.** Ps. 73: 28.

When a person cleaves to another person, he conforms himself to him; observes only him and all his wishes; is completely led by him; wakes and sleeps; works and rests; eats and drinks willingly with him; cannot live without him; if he can not be with him in the body, yet his heart and his mind are with him. If you thus cleave to the Lord as man cleaves to man it is not ill with you. But your cleaving to the Lord must go still deeper. Not only your mouth and your eye but also your heart, your soul, must cling to the Lord; your spirit must be one with Jesus. You must understand and follow the suggestions of His eyes just as your whole body understands and follows the promptings of your will. Your hands and your foot conform to your will. Your will lives, manifests itself and moves in your members. Thus also must you be in Jesus and Jesus in you; and thus also must you be led and moved

by Him. He who knows what He possesses in Christ and what he would be without Him, cleaves to Him with all his soul, with body and spirit; he is a true and living member on the body of Christ because he is animated and directed by Christ just as the members of his body are animated and directed by his soul.

Thou art my head, my Lord divine,
I am Thy member, wholly Thine;
And in Thy Spirit's strength would still
Serve Thee according to Thy will.

TUESDAY AFTER SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you. Jer. 3: 12. **Return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.** Is. 44: 22. **The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.** 2 Pet. 3: 9.

Where is the pious man who has not often turned away from the Lord and lost sight of His countenance? Yet, blessed are you even though you often turn away from Him if only you return at once to Him. Blessed are you even though you had forgotten Him a hundred times during the day, if only you seek His face a hundred times again. But if you remain away and continue in your turning away from the Lord, and in forgetting Him, the result will be a fall, a complete falling away from the Lord, a separation between you and Him. The heart loses courage to return unto Him even if it still were willing. It thinks, "He will no longer receive me; He will cause His anger to fall upon me; He has forsaken me." But these thoughts are false; for it is written otherwise in His Word than in your backslidden heart. He calls you. He wants backslidden Israel to return to Him. He is not willing that any soul, not even the apostate, should perish, but desires that it should be saved. Oh, that all might return, who more or less have turned away from the Lord, who formerly was so near and so good to them! Oh, that all might return who have lost sight of Him from their heart!

Oh, that they all might return unto Him! How gladly would He again turn His kind face to them and let Himself be found of them!

I cannot live without Thy light,
Cast out and banished from Thy sight;
Thy holy joys, my God, restore,
And guard me that I fall no more.

WEDNESDAY AFTER SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist, stedfast in the faith. 1 Pet. 5: 8. 9. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Rom. 16: 20.

You have a mighty enemy whom you do not see; the world does not believe in His existence; it regards belief in his activity as fanaticism and nonsense. But all the mightier, and all the more dangerous is his activity. The apostles Peter and Paul knew him and believed in his existence, and also warned the faithful against his arts, not imaginary, but real and dangerous. What more terrible than a roaring Lion? How careful you would be if a lion were near you and you knew you were threatened by him! But are not the attempts of Satan much more terrible and dangerous? To deny his existence or his "walking about," his desire to "devour" will not protect you against him. What, then, protects you? Faith, earnest resistance in faith, and constant prayer. He who does not believe in the devil's existence, who does not resist him, is already caught in his snares. He who believes in his existence, but does not watch, nor pray, will fall into his jaws and not escape therefrom without deep wounds, if he is not altogether devoured by him. Satan has assailed and tempted the head, Christ; should he then fear His members, His disciples, or spare them? We are too frail and impotent as against him. We cannot overcome him; but the Lord has overcome him, and Christ will

and can overcome him in us. He is stronger than the "strong man." He who remains in Christ has overcome the "strong man," the "wicked one" (1 John 2: 13). But "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5: 19). "It is taken captive by him to do his will" (2 Tim. 2: 26). God alone can "deliver us from his power" (Col. 1: 13).

From strength to strength go on,
Wrestle, and fight, and pray:
Tread all the powers of darkness down
And win the well-fought day.

THURSDAY AFTER SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned. Cant. 8: 7 .

Love for love. If you had given all that you have, and all that you are; if you had sacrificed yourself fully and completely for the sake of love, you would yet not have paid its price: you would have given nothing for it. Still you have not sacrificed this "nothing;" perhaps you will not sacrifice this "nothing" in earnest. So insignificant do you regard love, that love which is costlier and more precious than all the costly and precious things contained in heaven and on earth. It is God Himself, the highest good. Love will bestow upon you itself, but you are also to sacrifice your heart and to make yourself susceptible to love by emptying your heart of everything which is not love, of everything which is not of God. Let all other things depart, that you may contain only this. Love wants to possess your heart alone, and it will give itself to you whole and undivided. You owe love for love; you owe it from eternity; for Love has loved you from eternity, and, besides, Love has in time sacrificed itself for you. You can, throughout all eternity, not become richer, more glorious, more blissful, than if you eternally love this eternal Love with an undivided heart, and when you completely surrender yourself to it.

O Lord, how cheering is Thy ray!
All pain before Thy presence flies;
Care, anguish, sorrow, melt away,
Where'er Thy healing beams arise:
O Jesus, nothing may I see,
Nothing desire or seek but Thee.

FRIDAY AFTER SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it. Luke 17: 22. Oh, that I had wings like a dove! Ps. 55: 6. Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. Ps. 120: 5. 6.

"The days of the Son of man," the days when Jesus walked about on the earth, were undoubtedly blissful days to those who knew Him and who associated with Him. Who knows Him and does not at the same time wish that he could often be transported to those days, to see the loving "Son of man" walk about in the flesh, and speak to Him face to face? We may do it in the spirit by His grace. We can have Him as near, and associate with Him as confidentially, as if we saw Him and spoke to Him. But we can never have Him near enough. We desire to have Him still nearer. The soul, therefore, wishes "wings" that it might fly to Him. If the soul be faithful and enduring in its longing, it sometimes receives "wings" so that it can raise itself to Him. But then it becomes so much harder for the soul to descend and to be obliged to dwell so long among Mesech and the Kedarines (Gen. 10: 2; 25: 13), that is to say, among people who no more know Christ nor believe in Him nor have any more regard for Him than the savage Scythians or the ravaging Arabs. It is hard to deal with unbelievers, who do not possess His peace, because they do not know Him; who, therefore, persecute those who love Him and believe in Him; it is hard for the soul to deal with people who ridicule that which they do no understand. But be at peace, dear soul. He Himself has for your sake dwelt here and walked among men who hated Him "without a cause."

Let the world despise and leave me,
They have left my Savior, too;
Human hearts and looks deceive me;
Thou art not, like them, untrue:
And while Thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends may scorn you;
Show Thy face and all is bright.

SATURDAY AFTER SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established. Is. 7: 9. He that believeth shall not make haste. Is. 28: 16. Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. 1 Cor. 16: 13. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 1 John 5: 4.

He who does not watch and pray that his faith may be kept and daily increased and "established," will not long stand fast nor remain steadfast in the faith. His faith will become unbelief, imagination, or idle talk. He will not be established in Christ, nor will he be able to endure His stigma; he will make haste to flee from Christ to the world, at any rate in his heart. He who has a living faith, does "not make haste" to come to any one else. He stands fast, because Christ who dwells in him is stronger than he who dwells in the world, yea stronger than the whole world. Our endurance and our steadfastness, as well as our victory over the world, the flesh and the devil, are dependent upon the life of faith. If the faith live in us, Christ lives in us. If Christ live in us, we can hold our own against all enemies. We are then stronger than the world and we conquer, yea, more than conquer. Christ *in us* is the life of faith and the victory over all things.

We thank Thee then, O God of heaven,
That Thou to us this faith has given;
Preserve to us Thy Spirit's grace
Till we shall see Thee face to face.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you. Jer. 29: 13. 14. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. Phil. 2: 21.

Many who "seek" do not find, because they do not seek what they profess to seek, or because they seek in a half-hearted way, and with many by-considerations; in reality they seek their own and not Jesus Christ. Since Paul, at the blessed time of the first apostolic Christianity, asserted this concerning all of his co-workers, who should not, in our selfish times, fear lest he deceive himself? Who should not, to free himself from this fear, examine himself earnestly to find whether he seeks Jesus alone, nothing but Jesus, Him and no other thing beside Him? The promise, "I will be found by you," can never fail. The Lord keeps His word. The fault lies with those who seek. It lies in their not seeking Him *with all their heart,* or in their not seeking Him, but themselves or their own. Dear seeking soul, examine yourself. Examine your heart before the eyes of Him whom you seek. See if it clings completely to Him; if you are ready to sacrifice everything for Him; if you expect to find nothing else in Him but Himself; if He alone is sufficient for you; if you can forsake all else; and if you think as Asaph thought. (Ps. 73: 25. 26).

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me,
All my trust on Thee is stayed;
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

MONDAY AFTER SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts. Prov. 17: 3. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver. Mal. 3: 3.

Many who seek the Lord and believe that they have found Him, think that now all is well and that no tribulation can come near them any more. But since such persons have not sought the Lord sincerely and seek only easy days with Him, tribulation and fear must come upon them. Just in order to melt away and burn out the slack of by-considerations and egotism, just to purify, "purge" and establish the heart, it must into the heat of tribulation, as the silver and the gold must into the fire. When misery and misfortune, tribulation and fear befall one who seeks in a half-hearted way, he thinks, or hears it asked by the world, "What is now your reward for having sought the Lord?" Oh, very much! for now the Lord has sought and found me; now He tries and purifies my heart; now I seek Him with my whole heart that I may find Him.

When on my aching, burdened heart
My sins lie heavily,
Thy pardon speak, new peace impart;
Good Lord, remember me.

When trials sore obstruct my way,
And ills I cannot flee,
Oh, let my strength be as my day;
Good Lord, remember me.

TUESDAY AFTER SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found. Ps. 32: 5. 6. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Prov. 28: 13.

Pay particular attention to the fact that it is the business of the saints to "confess" their sins, and to beseech God, before whom not even the heavens are clean, for forgiveness. What kind of a saint are you if you do not acknowledge and confess your sins? The Lord forgives those only who sincerely confess. The sins of the proud and secure saints are holden them by Him unto judgment. However, do not say, "I must and I

will commit sin, for I must have sin to confess; otherwise my Savior would not have anything to forgive and to redeem; He is a Savior and a Redeemer." You are a sinner, and you commit sin without such Satanic purpose. For even with the most sincere effort to attain holiness, we make many mistakes; we fall only too often. Then only will you rightly acknowledge and confess your sin when you strive to be without sin or to put off all sin. The greatest saints are in their own eyes the greatest sinners, for the more holy they seek to become, the more sinful they feel themselves to be. He who does not earnestly pursue holiness, does not find nor acknowledge any sin. Nor do the saints confess that they are sinners in general, but they confess their particular sins. There are many who call themselves miserable sinners without acknowledging, before the face of the Lord, a single one of their sins. If one unveil to them one of their sins, they put on airs and begin to justify themselves, all because they desire only to seem holy but not in reality to be holy.

May earthly feelings die,
And fruits of faith increase;
And Adam's nature prostrate lie
Before the Prince of peace.

Endue us, Lord, with strength,
To triumph over sin:
That we may with Thy saints at length
Eternal glory win.

WEDNESDAY AFTER SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word. Ps. 119: 25. For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul. Jer. 31: 25; Is. 57: 15.

He who is not weary has no taste for rest, nor does he need refreshment. But when the soul is deeply bowed down and turns like a worm in the dust; when it deeply feels its misery, poverty, faintness, shortcomings, and sinfulness, and cries to the Lord for

mercy He comes and revives the weary soul with His peace, that "surpasseth all understanding;" then He fills the hungry soul, the soul anxious for salvation, with heavenly good things, and pours out the treasures of grace in its bosom so that it believes itself at once transferred from a wilderness to a paradise, from hell to heaven, from the devil to the angels. He who is in the first state should also believe in the second. For as the first is accomplished, so must also the second surely come. Everything has its time. After the drought, the rain comes at length. The day follows the night.

To Thee I tell each rising grief,
For Thou alone canst heal;
Thy Word can bring a sweet relief
For every pain I feel.

THURSDAY AFTER SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Be not slothful in business. Rom. 12: 11. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Heb. 12: 3. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. Heb. 12: 12.

Slothfulness and weariness are sure to smuggle themselves in, when you become secure in grace and when, after having received the forgiveness of sins, you do not make war against evil habits, but make peace with one or another bosom-sin and in a subtle manner cling to it; when you, while enjoying the goodness of the Lord, believe that it is not necessary to be on your guard against your old enemies; that the wicked one can now no more cause you any injury, and that you can no more be lost, because you are in the bosom of God. Only too soon comes the old habit and inclination, the sin that still clings to us, into view. Grace diminishes because we do not hold it fast, and because we are not zealous but lukewarm in the service of the Lord. Then we feel faint and permit "the hands" to "hang down" and we spare "the feeble knees." Not so, beloved! Follow the Apostle's admonition. Take courage and lift up the hands which hang down, and the

feeble knees, that ye may raise your hands to heaven and make your footsteps sure. The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory, shall prepare, establish, strengthen, settle you.

Ye servants of the Lord,
Each in His office wait,
Observant of His heavenly Word,
And watchful at His gate.

FRIDAY AFTER SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves — — — lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. 2 Tim. 3: 1. 2. 4. We ought not to please ourselves — — —. For even Christ pleased not himself. Rom. 15: 1. 3.

Shameless self-love flatters even the pious; they look down upon others and esteem themselves more highly than their imperfect brethren, yea, they even despise them. There is no poison more injurious to be had at any chemist's shop than that which you, my beloved, carry in your heart in great quantities and which poisons all your deeds, and embitters your every enjoyment, if you be not on your guard: this poison is your miserable self-complacency, your blind self-love. Do not excuse yourself. You love yourself too much. Acknowledge and confess it openly, and if you do not desire to lose all grace, then seek an antidote against this deadening poison. Seek the riches of God's grace and love in Christ Jesus, your Lord. He alone can bruise the Serpent's head in you and heal you from its venomous bite. Watch and pray unceasingly, if you would have this brood of vipers exterminated from your heart, if you would escape death from its poison.

Lord, forever at Thy side
Let my place and portion be!
Strip me of the robe of pride,
Clothe me with humility.

SATURDAY AFTER SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. Ps. 121: 1. **And the mountain shall drop sweet wine.** Amos 9: 13. **The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan. This is the hill which God desireth to dwell in.** Ps. 68: 15. 16. Cfr. Is. 2: 2; 25: 6; Mic. 4: 1.

By this figure, "the hill of God," the Fathers understood sacred prayer, the worship of God in the spirit, because the temple, the dwelling-place of Jehovah, stood on a hill. As prayer is a lifting up, an upward flight of the mind to God, during which all things pertaining to this world are left behind, down in the valley, and the heart is in heaven and, so to spak, dwells on high and in the sanctuary of God, this figure is very appropriate. From these "hills" comes all help. They "drop sweet wine;" yea, streams of divine blessing, exceeding riches of spiritual good things, flow down from these mountains upon all who strive to raise themselves thither by faith and confidence, with a perfectly undivided mind, there to seek the presence of the Savior. From these hills one never returns empty-handed but always loaded down with the good things of heaven. When we have raised ourselves in the spirit to the hill of earnest prayer and drawn near unto the Lord, it is as though we had been in heaven. Wherefore David prayed, "O, send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto Thy holy hill, and to Thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy" (Ps. 43: 3. 4).

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known:
In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

We love him, because he first loved us. 1 John 4: 19. **In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.** 1 John 4: 9.

There are depths to the bottom of which we cannot fathom. The lowest depth of all is this, that God has "loved us first," and not merely loved us, but loved us so that He could love us no more; has given us so much that He could give us no more. He has given us His only begotten Son, His own perfect likeness, God from eternity and to eternity, and sent Him to distress and death for our sake. Who can fathom these depths? Here we stand as at an abyss, and worship. Best would it be for us that we throw ourselves into this abyss of love, for to that end it has opened itself for us. To search and brood is here without avail. God desires to be loved, that He may love us all the more and that we may become all the more susceptible to His infinite and bliss-giving love.

Praised be the Lord, my God,
My Bliss, my Life from heaven,
The Father's love's Son,
Who for mankind was given,
Who hath atoned for me
With His most precious blood,
Who giveth to my faith
The greatest heavenly good.

MONDAY AFTER QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? Deut. 32: 6. **For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me.** John 16: 27. **Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.** 1 John 3: 1.

He who loves the Son is also loved by the Father; that is beyond doubt. We notice the same fact in man also. They who love the children, get the goodwill of the parents. Their heart goes out to the person who shows love to their children. That the

same should be true in regard to God, is something we neither could expect nor believe, because we are far from having deserved it and because we are not lovable. But here stands the Son Himself and declares it to us, "The Father Himself loveth you because ye love me." Oh, what a glorious word! Now, then, we know how our case stands. If we feel love, inclination toward Christ, in our hearts, we have therein a seal and proof that we are loved by the Father, and that we are His sons. Dear souls, if ye possess love to Christ in you, ye have also the Father's love in you. But do not let your love for Him who died for you consist in mere words and pretentions, emotions and ideas, but in deed and in truth. Jesus says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14: 5).

Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ.

O make but trial of His love:
Experience will decide
How blest are they, and only they,
Who in His truth confide.

TUESDAY AFTER QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Luke 12: 32. **My kingdom is not of this world.** John 18: 36.

God gives you His kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, here and hereafter. If this is not sufficient for you, then find some one else that will give you more. You must possess an insatiable desire for gain, if that which God gives you in His Son is not enough for you. Still, that which God promises has been to this day too little for the world at large; it ever seeks other things. The world pursues, yearns after and grasps with burning desire every shadow, but not that which God offers and lays into its lap. All the other gifts of God in the world are more dear to the worldly minded than the highest, best and

greatest gift, which is worth more than a thousand worlds—Christ and His kingdom, God's kingdom. Seeing that the world throws it aside, may thou grasp it, thou "little flock," despised by the world. The more the world disdains it, the more of it will He impart to thee. But remember that "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17: 21). The world will have no inner treasure, for it sees it not, nor does it understand. He who desires to have the kingdom of God, must enter into his own heart and meditate upon himself. He must desire to stay at home with himself, and walk after the Spirit, not after the flesh.

Grant my mind and my affections,
Wisdom, counsel, purity;
That I may be ever seeking
Naught but that which pleases Thee,
Let Thy knowledge spread and grow,
Working error's overthrow.

WEDNESDAY AFTER QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. — — — — For of such is the kingdom of heaven. Mat. 18: 3; 19: 14.

That the Lord did not say this to simple-minded men, concerning whom one might believe that they are of no account and that it were better for them to remain in their simple-mindedness, but to the first and most important in His kingdom, yea, to the apostles themselves, is a fact we know and of which we may read before and after the Scripture passage just quoted. There are many other passages in which Christ exhorts His disciples to become lowly and to humble themselves. As He Himself was the most lowly, and the most child-like, we may learn from His example, even though He had not exhorted us in plain words. He who will not become a child, child-like, is no fit applicant for the kingdom of heaven. How should he be able to be a teacher and a guide to heaven? We see, then, that this kingdom distinguishes itself from all other kingdoms. It is the greatest; it is vast; and yet no giant, none

mighty in power, can seize it. Only children can get possession of it, and take it by violence. In this sense also it is true that "when I am weak, then am I strong," for I can lift the heavens and cary them away. On the contrary, if I am strong, then I am weak and cannot hold anything fast, so that I must let go of all, both heaven and earth.

Lord, make me humble as a child,
Lord, make my spirit pure,
That love's own message, sweet and mild,
My heart from sin may cure.

THURSDAY AFTER QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children but in understanding be men. 1 Cor. 14: 20. Cfr. Eph. 4: 14. I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. Rom. 16: 19.

St. Paul here explains to us the mind of Christ. He shows us that Christ does not desire to have children with a simplicity akin to stupidity, but He desires hearts that are of noble simplicity, honest souls that are without deceit, duplicity or hypocrisy. The Lord does not desire children of darkness, craftiness or wickedness, but children of light, truth and righteousness. The evil in the world should be as foreign to us as it is to the smallest child. On the other hand, we should know and understand that which is good better than the oldest and most experienced worldlings and worldly wise, as David says, "Thy commandments have made me wiser than mine enemies. I have more understanding than all my teachers. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts" (Ps. 119: 98—100). When, therefore, our Lord and St. Paul bid us become like children, they do not refer to childishness, nor the ignorance of a child's understanding, but the simplicity of the child and the purity of the child-like mind. It also becomes evident that true simplicity and child-likeness are the seat of true wisdom. The purer the mind, the clearer the understanding; the more corrupt the heart, the

more blind and muddled the head. Cleanse your heart from all the wickedness, and you kindle the light in your understanding. But if you permit wickedness in your heart, it will extinguish all light in your head.

Thou strong Defence, Thou holy Light,
Teach us to know our God aright,
And call Him Father from the heart:
The Word of life and truth impart.

FRIDAY AFTER QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. Ps. 73: 25. My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. Ps. 62: 5. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God. Truly, in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel. Jer. 3: 22. 23.

What were heaven without God and Jesus? Who would care to be in heaven without Him? God, Christ, is our heaven. Heaven would not be heaven if we did not have God, Christ, in heaven. What is a hell when the soul does not possess Christ, when one is not certain of His love. But now we are blessed everywhere and enjoy a heaven full of delight and happiness; He being near us, we possess Him both here and beyond. Who should not desire in faith, hope and love to possess Him, and to be in Him? "He who has himself only," as someone has said, "has nothing. He who should have the whole world, and nothing but the world, would yet have nothing. The world consists only of ciphers; the numbers are those only in whom God dwells."

Thee will I love, beneath Thy frown
Or smile, Thy sceptre or Thy rod.
What though my flesh and heart decay?
Thee shall I love in endless day.

SATURDAY AFTER QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. John 14: 18. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10: 10. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. John 5: 40.

The Lord loves His own as His children, and therefore He will not leave them alone in this world. Even though His visible presence is denied them, that they may learn to believe in the Invisible as if they saw Him, yet is He near them in the Spirit. For what purpose does He come to His own? "That they might have life, and have it more abundantly;" that they might abundantly and in rich measure have everything that they need for a pious conduct and conversation. Woe to them whom this complaint concerns, "Ye will not come to me that ye might receive that life which I will give unto you; ye prefer death instead of life." Dear soul, here stands your living Savior before you in His Word, and He offers to come into your heart and grant you life eternal. In you as well as round about you there is only death and darkness. Which of the two do you wish, and which do you select now?

Let the sweet hope that Thou art mine
My path of life attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
And crown my journey's end.

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. Is. 57: 15.

The high and lofty One can not see above Himself, but only beneath Himself; there is nothing above Him, as He is the highest. Therefore He sees and can only see lowly, the bowed down, the humble hearts, which the hammer of His Word and the power of His Spirit have stricken to the earth. Unto them, and unto them only, will He look in grace. That is to say, He lifts them up, revives them, heals their wounds, yea chooses even to dwell in them. The poor hut of a bowed down heart is not too small, not too low for the high and exalted One. He even finds such pleasure in it that His love cannot pass it by, but must enter and take up its

lasting abode there. He who is haughty,—and every sinner who is not contrite and humble, is haughty,—thinks himself more than God, and stands in his own mind superior to God. God does not and cannot look to such a one, because He sees only that which bows before Him. Therefore, O man, bow down, bow down always, even though you are already pardoned, if you desire that God shall look to you, dwell and remain in you.

Life and peace to me impart,
Seal salvation on my heart;
Breathe Thyself into my breast,—
Earnest of eternal rest.

MONDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil. 2: 13. **No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him — — — — except it were given unto him by my Father.** John 6: 44. 65.

That which man undertakes to do according to his own will and in his own strength, does not reach very far, lacks purity in the sight of God, and is not done in God. Are we, then, to infer from this that man is to fold his hands in his lap and neither to will nor to do because he can not accomplish anything without the aid and the power of the Father? Is he to wait and sit still until the Father comes to him? Yes, in a certain sense, for he must not undertake to do anything without throwing himself in spirit, body and soul, before his God and Savior and receiving power and strength from Him. For God is not far from any of us. We live, move and have our being in Him. He dwells in those who humble themselves before Him. He works, as Jesus says (John 5: 17) always, and thus works all in him who humbly and confidently undertakes everything in Him. You ought, therefore, by no means desist in your work; only desist from letting down the net in your own name. You must do it in His name only. Then He will

never fail to work in you both to will and to do to draw you closer to everything that is good, and bestow upon you all that you need.

Holy Ghost, with power divine,
Cleanse this guilty heart of mine:
In Thy mercy pity me,
From sin's bondage set me free.

Holy Ghost, with joy divine,
Cheer this saddened heart of mine;
Yield a sacred, settled peace,
Let it grow and still increase.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. Is. 41: 17.

The Lord leads many souls on rough paths through life. They walk as through a sandy desert where no water of consolation or of refreshment can be found, where all fountains seem dried up, where one seeks comfort and finds none, only greater heart-sorrow. Even in our inner self, in the Lord's sanctuary, notwithstanding all prayer and weeping, no trace of grace reveals itself, just as if the Lord had thought to withdraw His grace from us as Job thought: "He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes. I cry unto Thee, and Thou dost not hear me: I stand up and Thou regardest me not" (Job 30: 19. 20). But souls that seem forsaken, as Job, may find comfort in the fact that the granting of their prayers neither can nor will fail. It is impossible for God to forsake them, even though indications point that way. He is near them during this crying, sighing and longing, and in this darkness He is their hidden light which in due time shall shine forth clearly in their eye.

Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face
And shall I seek in vain?
And can the ear of sovereign grace
Be deaf when I complain?

No, still the ear of sovereign grace
Attends the mourner's prayer:
O may I ever find access,
To breathe my sorrows there!

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. By grace ye are saved. Ps. 106: 1; 103: 11; Eph. 2: 5.

"Grace!" O blessed word! He who understands thee has heaven within himself. Yet, he who has only the word and not the essence, grace itself, has little or nothing. It were better that he had nothing—that he did not know the word. Grace is not given us that we should play with the word, but that we should live in grace and let the gracious, and merciful, and living God and Redeemer, live in us. Tell me, do you understand what this means? Have you experienced the grace of the living God in your heart? Oh, then, keep and use it, that it may not be taken from you. For if it is not used, it disappears. But if you live in grace and use it, it will grow and increase. Be at the same time humble: forget not that it is given you for nothing. Let grace remain grace: do not make it a matter of merit to yourself. Nor must you make it a pillow of slothfulness upon which to slumber. You must strive to keep awake, to be attentive, industrious, and alive in Christ. Grace endureth forever; do not shorten its duration for yourself. Grace is as high as the heaven above us, and so rich and full that the heavens can not contain it. Then it must be sufficiently rich and abundant that by it we may accomplish all things and have no need of becoming sleepy and slothful.

I rest upon Thy Word;
Thy promise is for me:
My succor and salvation, Lord,
Shall surely come from Thee.

L. Of C.

But let me still abide,
Nor from my hope remove,
Till Thou my patient spirit guide
Into Thy perfect love.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Ps. 46: 2. 3. What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him? Mat. 8: 27.

The depravity of this world is great everywhere. The world lieth in wickedness. The pious have at all times compared our life in this world with a dangerous voyage. There the winds must blow and the storms rage, otherwise the ship can not reach port. But in all storms and dangers the true Christian does not fear any more than the holy Psalmist feared when he sang this psalm. Let the sea of this life run high and roar as much as it will: he who has the right Pilot with him in the ship, in his heart, sails securely and without danger, and reaches unharmed the haven of rest. Yea, he who has the Lord with him does not tremble even if the world seems to perish and the mountains threaten to fall apart; for He who is with him is stronger than the mountains and the sea. He is the Lord of the universe. He can set bounds to everything.

Commit thou all thy griefs
And ways into His hands,
To His sure truth and tender care,
Who earth and heaven commands:
Who points the clouds their course,
Whom winds and seas obey,
He shall direct thy wandering feet,
He shall prepare thy way.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Ps. 37: 4. **Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any.** Is. 44: 8.

Search the heavens and the whole earth, and you will not find a better Lord, none who gives, or can give you, the desire of your heart; none who can blot out your sins and soothe your conscience; none who can give you a new heart, a heavenly mind, desire and power to keep His commandments; none who can work in you a living hope of eternal life, of divine glory, and establish and seal it as He can; none upon whom you may depend so safely and confidently in all your need as upon Him and from whom you may expect such powerful and ready help. He is, therefore, the Incomparable, the only one in heaven and upon the earth. But who knows Him as such? Who believes in Him as such? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Only he who has experienced it knows how blessed it is to be one with Him. Delight thyself in Him; that is the only condition; then He will be all to you, He will give you all that your heart may desire. Only give Him your heart and He will give you all. Only be completely His and He will be completely yours. When all the desires of your heart are turned toward Him, as the arms of a child in danger are stretched out toward its mother; when your longing and yearning encompass Him in such a manner, and you cling to Him, He will give you even more than your heart desires, more than it is able to desire. For before you have tasted and experienced it, you can not conceive of all the goodness, all the glory, and all the blessedness, which He gives unto those who delight in Him. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. 2: 9).

Hence all fears and sadness,
For the Lord of gladness,
Jesus, enters in;
They who love the Father,

Though the storms may gather,
Still have peace within,
Yea, whate'er I here must bear,
Thou art still my purest pleasure,
Jesus, priceless treasure.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT.

We beseech you brethren, that ye increase more and more; and that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business. 1 Thes. 4: 10. 11.

These exhortations by the apostles are not superfluous in our day, for there are many who are prattlers, who talk much about Christianity but do little. Hence these words of the apostle are sacred to every true Christian, inasmuch as he does not imagine that he has already apprehended it, but he follows after and strives to become ever more perfect, more faithful, more zealous and industrious to increase in every respect, in his spiritual as well as in his temporal calling, and grow up unto Him in all things who is the Head. He understands how to combine quietude of heart with faithfulness in his calling and untiring industry. He who does not understand this, does not know the grace of Christ nor the power of the Gospel. He who is truly pious will not let himself be found by God or man otherwise than praying or working, or still better, both praying and working. He knows too well that idle talk even concerning good things dissipates the heart and leaves the soul empty and spiritless instead of filling it with unction. When the mouth babbles a great deal, there is certainly no grace and peace in the heart. A heart filled with the peace of God preserves its treasure, covers it up and works rather than talks. A twaddler, an idle, inactive person, is certainly no Christian, even if he talks of nothing else but the Bible and of Christianity, and much less when he talks of hidden and future things of which he is not informed, inasmuch as he only runs around with suppositions on a wild-goose chase in the fog. Paul says that only by being "quiet" and by working ought we

to demonstrate our Christianity. Peter says that not much knowing and talking, but a meek and quiet spirit is precious in the sight of God, a man of heart and not one who is Christian only in tongue. Read the apostolic exhortations. Pray and examine yourself. Paul adjures and beseeches you to do it by Jesus Christ. Let yourself be moved thereby and refute in deeds the charges often made against piety. Show by your diligent and quiet conversation that the Spirit of Christ notwithstanding all its devotion and quietude, does not make us slothful and inactive.

Loving Jesus, gentle Lamb,
In Thy gracious hands I am,
Make me, Savior, what Thou art,
Live Thyself within my heart.

I shall then show forth Thy praise,
Serve Thee all my happy days:
Then the world shall always see
Christ, the holy Child, in me.

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Ex. 15: 11. **O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee?** Ps. 89: 8. **The desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.** Is. 26: 8.

If the Lord were to the pious hearts in the old covenant the highest good with which nothing else could be compared; if He did impart Himself to them in such an overflowing manner while the cloud yet hung above the sanctuary; if they already at that time had such experiences with Him that they lost desire of all other things so that He and the remembrance of Him constituted the greatest joy of their heart: what, then, should not we feel and experience in the new covenant where all who, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image? (2 Cor. 3: 18; 4: 6). What has He not done for us? What does He not do daily for souls that wait upon Him? What shall and will He not eternally do for us in

accordance with His promises? He who knows this and lives in the enjoyment of his salvation, most assuredly cries out a thousand times, "Lord, who is like unto thee?" In him no thought of anything else can arise. He can not harbor any wish in his soul to possess anything without or besides Him. Who would have so much patience and longsuffering with our weak hearts that are ever inclined to follow wrong paths and turn aside from Him? There is none like Him. May His name, His remembrance, be and continue to be the one desire and joy of our heart! May nothing else be so dear to us as He. However great, beautiful, inviting and attractive, it shall nevertheless not supersede Him in our heart. His place therein shall not be occupied by anything else. He alone shall be the one whom our soul embraces, holds fast and will not lose. Everything else that can not exist beside Him ought and must give place to Him, ought and must be superseded by Him. May our whole being, at every moment, say as with a thousand tongues, "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord?"

From day to day, O Lord do we
Highly exalt and honor Thee!
Thy name we worship and adore,
World without end for evermore!

MONDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. Is. 40: 11. He that scattered Israel will gather him, as a shepherd doth his flock. Jer. 31: 10. Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out, as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep. Ezek. 34: 11. 12.

The three major prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, testify for us to Christ's faithfulness as a "shepherd" which He Himself has described most beautifully and touchingly in John 10 and in Luke 15. He is no dreadful and terrifying ruler. He is our shepherd. He does not consider us as bondmen, but as His sheep. He does not want wool, gain and profit from us. He seeks only our welfare and salvation. He does not de-

spise any of His sheep, not even the most miserable, not even those who are gone astray and lost. He seeks after them with untiring zeal, and if He has found one, it is to Him as though He had found a kingdom. He accepts all as His sheep. That which the world despises and rejects, He gathers with care and love, watches and preserves with tender faithfulness. He does not leave His sheep to the hirelings; He Himself cares for His sheep. How many points of advantage, then, do the sheep of Christ have, who know Him as their good shepherd, experience His faithfulness as a shepherd and are under His protection? Oh, why do not all men make haste to come to Him? Why do so many despise this great happiness of being one of Christ's sheep? When shall the time come when there shall be one fold and one shepherd? It shall, it must come. "He that scattered Israel will also gather him."

Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tenderest care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy folds prepare;
Blessed Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

Meditations on the Passion of Christ.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. Zech. 13: 6. 7.

Those who loved Thee—did they inflict these wounds? Those who ought to have loved Thee, the people which was called by Thy name, which before the whole world was known as knowing the true God, and was proud of that fact, and which expected His Son to come down from heaven as the Messiah, Savior and Redeemer, did that people wound Thee, Thy so-called friends and elect, the children of Israel? Who does now wound the Lord? Now, too, it is His people, that calls itself by His name, that wants to be known as believing in Christ, as honoring and loving Him. The Gentiles do not wound Him, they know Him not. But His own, who ought to love Him, attack Him with all the weapons of sin. He lets them strike that He may heal those who strike Him. The Father also cherishes the same love to the ungrateful, and He calls down the sword of death upon His Son, upon Him who is His equal in divine nature and eternal being. What a word in the mouth of God is this, "Awake, O sword, strike my shepherd instead of the sheep, strike Him who is nearest and most like unto me, that those who have gone astray from me, the deeply fallen, may be brought out of the depths, out of the abyss of depravity, and near unto me." Behold here the council of God, the judgment upon His beloved Son for your salvation! The Father called down all this suffering upon His Son, not because He did not love

Him, but because they both loved man—man, who did not love them, but who hated them. O love, take our hearts captive. Here is mine.

Five bleeding wounds he bears,
Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly speak for me;
Forgive Him, O forgive, they cry,
Nor let that ransomed sinner die!

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. — — — — He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil. 2: 7. 8.

Christ's making Himself "of no reputation" and His humility is something that we can not comprehend, because we are unable to conceive the highness and the glory which He had with the Father from the beginning. We can not measure the height in which He was, and, therefore, we are unable to fathom the depth to which He descended. It is sufficient that we know that He is the Highest, yet became the Lowest, He is the Omnipotent, yet became the Most Impotent; He is the Holiest, yet took upon Himself the sin of the whole world. His love to us drove Him down into these depths. For He must needs step as low as we were low and fallen, in order that He might draw us out of the deepest depravity. This He has done, the faithful God, and for this He desires to have nothing but love and that we gratefully enjoy and possess that which He, by His humbling Himself, even unto the death of the cross, has earned for us. By this that He suffered and died, we are to live and be saved. All was lost for man by the fall; all was found again and restored by the humilation of God. All men were the captives and the bondmen of sin, death and hell; all became free, redeemed, ransomed, by the Son of God, by His bonds, captivity and cross. All blood on earth was depraved, poisoned and cursed; all blood may be-

cleansed, made pure and blest by the blood of the Atoner.

Thou, ah Thou, hast taken on Thee
Bitter stroke, a cruel rod;
Pain and scorn were heaped upon Thee,
O Thou sinless Son of God.

Only thus for me to win
Rescue from the bands of sin;
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Blessed Jesus unto thee.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all. 1 Tim. 2: 5. 6. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. Is. 53: 4. 5.

That our Savior, though true God, yet also was true man; that He felt as a man; that He had assumed true human nature which was capable of sufferings; was demonstrated throughout His whole life, and especially in the last days of His passion. Therefore the Apostle Paul says in plain words that the man Jesus Christ who was in the form of God, and whom he elsewhere calls "God blessed for ever," made Himself of no reputation and humbled Himself. As God only He could not suffer. But His love compelled Him, nevertheless, to redeem men by suffering, and to show them His love by dying, inasmuch as He Himself suffered that penalty of death which they had deserved. In order to do this, He must needs assume human nature and clothe Himself in our misery and weakness. Who among us would suffer himself to become a reptile? And yet this would by no means be as degrading and as humiliating for us as it was for the Son of God to become man; to be in the likeness of condemned sinners and to die as a malefactor; to sweat blood in the agony of death; to fight against death; to feel Himself forsaken by God; to be cursed and rejected by His own creatures; to be stricken, wounded, spat upon and

counted among transgressors. All this, and much more did the God-man do for thee, O soul. All His agony, all His sorrows, all the bruises and wounds that thou seest upon Him, were caused by thee. All this did He voluntarily suffer for thee, that He might thereby redeem thee and prepare for thee joy and salvation.

What language shall I borrow
To thank Thee, dearest Friend.
For this Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end!
O make me Thine forever,
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never,
Outlive my love to Thee.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

And they went out into the mount of Olives. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me. — — — — And he began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Mat. 26: 30. 31. 37.

Oh, that the hearts of all men would repair to that place in spirit and, if only for an hour, earnestly consider what the Savior there suffered for them! Then all would surely say farewell to sin and to the world and throw themselves into His arms: they would become Christians. Yet, O pious Christian, even though they will not all go with you thither; even though they be offended because of Him, even though they all regard His sufferings as of little consequence, you will nevertheless often repair to Him, your suffering Atoner. It will be your dearest occupation on earth, the delight and joy of your heart to gladden your soul by the sufferings of the Redeemer. Nowhere else will you find bowers with such delightful fragrance, nowhere else inhale an aroma more bracing for spirit and heart than in this garden. No clearer light can shine for you than that which shines for you this night, as you throw yourself down before your Savior on the Mount of Olives, regard Him while He prays for you, weeps, sighs, struggles, perspirng blood for your sake. O do not

let this most sacred event, the most remarkable that ever took place and that ever was recorded on earth—do not let it be recorded in vain for you; but gather together all that has been written concerning the sorrows and sufferings of your Savior, place them as costly gems in the treasury of your heart and feast your eyes day and night therewith. Then you are richer and happier than all who are called happy and rich on earth.

Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the Cross I spend,
Life, and health, and peace possessing
From the sinners' dying Friend.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT.

And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. Luke 22: 44.

What few words, and yet how much they contain! Centuries will not suffice, and all tongues and pens are too few, to state or describe what the Savior has suffered. He who quickens the dead; He who, like the Father, has life in Himself; He who has given to all life and spirit and all things; struggles in death in order that He may give to all sinners guilty of death, life and salvation. He struggles in death, is full of the agony of death. How incomprehensible is this, and yet what a matter of joy, and how trustworthy! Life, the Originator of life, struggles in death, and His agony and terror wring from Him bloody sweat,—and you will put no restraint upon yourself that you may become disengaged from the sin that causes Him so much pain? He prays, and prays ever more forcibly and earnestly,—and you will not be constant in prayer, letting your hands fall so soon? His sweat becomes like blood because of your sins,—and you are neither anxious nor troubled, you do not feel concerned about your salvation? You leave that to the gracious God and follow your inclinations. Alas! I fear that you let the bloody sweat of your Savior fall on the ground without making use

of it and that it will be lost for you. O come, and make haste to the Mount of Olives. Behold the drops of His blood! Pray, and struggle with your Savior until you perceive the power and the efficacy of His blood in your heart, until you have found peace in Him. Then do not let go of that which you find in Him but hold it fast throughout all eternity.

Glory be to Jesus,
Who, in bitter pains,
Poured for me the life-blood
From His sacred veins!

Abel's blood for vengeance
Pleaded to the skies;
But the blood of Jesus
For our pardon cries!

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb. 12: 2. **To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.** Rev. 3: 21.

In afflictions and deep darkness nothing is more beneficial, comforting, and strengthening than a look at Jesus, the suffering and the crucified Redeemer. Turn not your eyes hither and thither and do not seek comfort here and there in men and nature. Seek it where it is to be found, where it lies prepared for you. Look to Jesus who is the "author" of the work of faith in you; He shall and must also be its "finisher." See Him suffer and die. Behold Him at whose service all joy and glory in heaven stood, away back in eternity, who yet, voluntarily, left all joy and chose the cross, and death, re-entering His glory. That which His divine power accomplished and wrought in His human nature, it is able to accomplish even in you, in your human nature, for you are bone of His bones and flesh of His flesh. As He conquered in His great misery

and agony, so also shall you conquer by Him, if you regard Him in faith. As He, after His sufferings, was exalted to the right hand of God, and sits on the throne in His human nature, so also shall you be exalted by Him if you overcome by Him. That which He could accomplish and become, you can accomplish and become by Him. Follow Him with your eyes from the Mount of Olives to the right hand of God and let His power work mightily in you; then shall you also enter with Him from suffering into glory.

Jesus, may our hearts be burning,
With more fervent love for Thee;
May our eyes be ever turning
To Thy Cross of agony;
Till in glory, parted never
From the blessed Savior's side,
Graven in our hearts forever,
Dwell the Cross, the Crucified.

MONDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

And he fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. Mat. 26: 39.

What art thou, O man? How deeply art thou fallen since the Son of God must fall to earth in such a struggle for thy sake! How great thy depravity must be, how terrible thy sin, how dangerous thy wounds, and how incurable thy disease, since thy Physician must work Himself to death enduring so muh agony and misery. From the means employed to effect thy cure thou couldst and shouldst draw the conclusion as to the nature of thy disease. The means is awe-inspiring. One can not think of it without heartrending sorrow. It cuts the innermost parts of the soul like a two-edged sword and penetrates marrow and bones. How terrible and hopeless thy injury, thy disease! Oh, then learn by regarding thy Atoner and Mediator, thy Physician and Savior, His pain and suffering, to know thyself and to understand who and what thou art. Humble thyself for once and cast thyself down before Him on that earth

which is dyed with His bloody sweat shed for thee! Gather up the drops of His blood in thy heart, that it may thereby become softened, changed and cleansed. This bitter cup of death hast thou filled for Him. Thou hast by thy sins filled this cup with death, and with the terrors of death, and He was compelled to drink it. In the place thereof He now hands to thee the cup of salvation and life. Open the mouth of faith and drink. Seest thou thy Savior lying on His face praying for thee, and emptying the most bitter cup in thy stead, then do not feel ashamed to bow thy knees and on thy face pay Him homage and beseech Him for power and grace to wage the battle and to be patient during the days of thy pilgrimage.

May Thy rich grace impart
Strength to my fainting heart,
My zeal inspire;
As Thou hast died for me,
Oh, may my love to Thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be,
A living fire.

TUESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Heb. 12: 3. Fear not; for I have redeemed thee; thou art mine. Is. 43: 1.

When the perverted spirit of mistrust comes upon you, hasten to Golgotha and behold there what your God has done and suffered for you. When you fix your eye on this, faith and trust must be revived, and the sleep of mistrust and despondency must leave you. Send all doubts and all devils to the cross of Christ; there they may try their strength and demonstrate their power. Do not forget that you, as a defenceless child, are not equal to them and that you can not cope with them. Take refuge in your mother's bosom; throw yourself with confidence in the arms of your crucified Redeemer; He will fight for you and kill all the doubts and all the temptations on His cross. For in the

atmosphere of the cross they do not thrive but must die. If they meet you outside of Golgotha, far away from the cross of Christ, then you are beaten. Their breath poisons, paralyzes and kills you. Keep therefore constantly at the cross of Christ. Consider incessantly His suffering and death by which He has redeemed and ransomed you. Just on that account you are His, and no devil shall tear you from Him, if you only remain in Him, and depart not from His cross. There all mistrusting thoughts and doubts that weaken your confidence, become unveiled as liars and blasphemers. For all doubts in regard to the Word of God and its promises are lies and blasphemies, because they contradict His Word and present it as false and as a fabrication. They are the brood of hell, the children of the devil, which you must crush against the rock of the cross of Christ.

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt an all my pride.
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the cross of Christ, my God:
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

The chastisement of our peace was upon him. — — — — And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. Is. 53: 5. 6.

What do you fear, O sinner? The penalty of sin? Do you fear judgment, death, devil, and hell, as the wages earned by your sins? Do not fear that which does not lie upon you, but which lay upon Christ. He entered the judgment, and death, and the battle against the devil, and hell, for you. He has endured, overcome and conquered it all. Why then, do you fear that which no more lies upon you, that which was laid upon the back of the Lamb and which He has taken away, blotted out and made good? But how did your sins come to lie upon His back ? God laid them upon Him because

He foresaw that you could not bear them and blot them out, and that they would crush you. God took pity upon your back, and therefore He laid your sins upon the back of His Son, and the Son took them upon Himself, voluntarily, and carried them away. Therefore, do not fear that which is abolished and blotted out, but turn your eye diligently to the back of the Lamb and behold how heavily He is laden with your sins; how He, bowed down beneath His heavy burden, is in deep agony; how He sighs, sweats blood and comes near to perishing. Learn from this to fear that which is yet terrible, and which will always continue to be terrible, as long as you sojourn in the flesh, namely, the sinful lusts that tempt you unto sin. Learn, by considering the Lamb laden with sin, what an evil sin is and how carefully you must guard against it and against laying new burdens upon the Lamb of God and call down upon you new judgments and new penalties. On the other hand, seek to possess that peace which the Lamb of God by blotting out your sins has purchased for you. This peace your old sins shall not and can not steal from you; but new unfaithfulness and new offences against the Lamb will rob you of it. Beware and regard unceasingly the Lamb of God.

Thou didst bear the smiting only
That it might not fall on me;
Stoodest falsely charged and lonely,
That I might be safe and free;
Comfortless that I might know
Comfort from thy boundless woe.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Blessed Jesus, unto Thee.

THURSDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: where they crucified him. John 19: 17. 18.

He who carries heaven and earth and all things by the word of His power carries your *cross,* O soul, and because of His love for you, He calls it "His cross."

His love has appropriated it. For no cross belongs to Him. The heavens and all the glories of the heavens are His. Glory and adoration are due Him both from angels and from men. Now He has a cross, the tree of the curse, of disgrace and death upon His shoulders and calls it His own cross as if He were the guilty one, the sinner that must needs die upon the cross. Thus He goes forth beneath your cross, which He loves as His own, and He bears your guilt. Follow Him, O soul, with your eyes; consider this road of the cross which your Savior walks. Think for a moment! How could God lay such a heavy cross upon His beloved Son? Think of it! Your cross which you should have carried He took from your shoulders and laid it upon the shoulders of His innocent Son, as if you were dearer to Him, and as if you lay heavier on His heart than His Son. Who can comprehend such love? No man and no angel. The angels desire to look into this mystery of God's love, but they are unable to do so; they also, as we, have eyes too weak and too shortsighted to fathom these depths. But there is something which you can do and which you ought to do, namely, to take up that cross which He bore for you, give it a place in your heart, never forget how heavy the cross was that He had to carry for you, how highly God has loved you inasmuch as He spared not His own Son, but laid your cross, that you yourself could not bear, upon Him in order that you should not perish but be saved and blessed.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

FRIDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture. Ps. 22: 12. 17. 18.

Jesus was robbed of His garments and nailed to the cross naked. He permitted all things to be taken from

Him. He permitted His life to be taken, in order that He might give us life, the garment of innocence and of glory, and the vesture of righteousness. He who clothes all things, the flowers of the field, all the fowl in the air, and the whole earth in such varied beauty, stands stripped of all beauty, as the poorest and the most despised, as a sheep for the slaughter, in order to sacrifice Himself for His creatures. He who taught, "If a man will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also," has permitted Himself to be stripped perfectly naked so that there was not even a thread left upon Him which He did not sacrifice for us. Who will permit to be taken from him a single garment even of his superfluous clothing? How highly do not men value their clothes! How much vanity does not dwell inside of their clothing! How proud are they not of this borrowed beauty! How do they not despise a person who is poorly dressed! What privilege do not nice clothes give to the fool and the ungodly over the wise and the pious who are plainly attired! How many do not spend nearly their whole life thinking of their clothes! Behold, for this reason stands the Creator of all things stripped. Nevertheless, He has yet a garment left, more beautiful and more costly than any other garment that covers Him in His nakedness, which the angels admire and which we together with them will eternally worship. Light, love, humility and patience, are His garment in which He beams. But this shining raiment, however, can be seen only by eyes that God hath opened. O Lord, give us the faculty by which to see and comprehend the beauty of Thy nakedness!

Christ the Life of all the living,
Christ the death of death our foe,
Who Thyself for us once giving
To the darkest depths of woe,
Patiently didst yield Thy breath
But to save my soul from death;
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Blessed Jesus unto Thee.

SATURDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet. Ps. 22: 14. 16. He teacheth my hands to war. Ps. 18: 34. Wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling? Ps. 56: 13.

Thus did David complain in the name of Messiah, foreseeing His sufferings and also how the children of Israel would once "compass" Him and nail Him to the tree of the cross. If the ancients in the spirit considered the coming sufferings of the Savior and alluded thereto even though only certain fragments thereof stood clearly out before them, and even that in dim outlines, ought not we, then, let His sufferings constantly be before the eyes of our souls and not overlook even the least particular in His sufferings? Dear heart, behold how your Savior who so often stretched forth His hands to heal and to cure now of His own free will stretches out the same hands and permits them to be nailed to the cross for your sake, that cross at which you have not even patience to remain. May the pain which He felt from the strokes of the hammer that drove the nails through His blessed hands and feet, pierce your soul and cure it from every desire for the joys of the world! Grasp this hammer and these nails in spirit when your hands reach out after forbidden enjoyments, and your feet are inclined to follow some wrong path; when the lust of the flesh, selfishness and concupiscence make themselves felt in you, and nail them to the cross of Christ. Then you are crucified with Christ and shall live with Him; then His nailed hands shall teach your hands to warfare, and His pierced feet shall keep your feet from stumbling. But if you permit the evil lust to live in you, what benefit do you derive from your Savior on the cross? "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5: 24; Rom. 6: 6).

Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place!
Look on me with Thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace.
Receive me, my Redeemer;
My Shepherd, make me Thine!
Of every good the Fountain,
Thou art the Spring of mine!

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. Mark 15: 27. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Is. 53: 12.

He hung between thieves and transgressors as if He were the chief among them. Thus He would have it. All men are transgressors (Rom. 3: 12). He had taken upon Himself the transgressions of all men and bore them in His body on the tree. What shame, what disgrace, was then laid upon the most holy Son of God! How could the eyes of the most loving Father endure to see Him in such company, in such a place, hanging between thieves on the cursed tree? The Father did see Him and suffered Him to hang. Why? Because He hated Him? O no! but because He loved you; because He would blot out your transgressions and out of transgressors make righteous and blessed men. Thus only God loves. Thus no man or angel can love. But because He humbled Himself so deeply, not despising the transgressors, He shall receive a multitudinous host of sinners as His portion and peculiar possession; yea, He shall even make "the strong," the grossest and most hardened transgressors, His spoil. O soul, consider your Savior on the cross in His disgrace and in His love! How much is not wrought by His love! What glorious and innumerable fruits does not this tree bear! How far does not the power of His sufferings and prayers for sinners reach! Sinners of all centuries and of all peoples on earth may thank His bleeding intercession

upon the cross for salvation and blessedness. The granting of His prayers has no end. The world without end shall declare it.

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

MONDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

And (before they crucified him) they gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. Mat. 27: 34. **Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.** Luke 23: 34.

They offer Him gall: He repays the bitter draught with the sweet prayer for the forgiveness of their sins. What is all our conduct and action but gall and wormwood? Sin manifestly is more bitter to Him than gall and more distasteful than vinegar and tincture of myrrh. He is not fond of this bitter draught which we offer Him. Nevertheless, He does not reject nor curse us because of this; but He appears before His Father in our stead and prays that God will not impute to us our sins nor judge us. However, after God has pardoned you, you must no longer offer Him gall and tincture of myrrh, but the sweet wine of love and gratitude. Your soul must cling to God with a loving and faithful heart. The bitter gall of evil lust, of hatred and of envy, is unbearable to Him. His grace will create in you a burning desire to please Him; a holy earnestness in "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts and in living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." He turns from His murderers to His Father; yet not against them, but for them. He does not call down vengeance upon His enemies, but the Father's mercy; He does not offer up complaints, but extenuations and intercessions; He does not demand of His Father that He send down fire to destroy His enemies, but that He would grant them forgiveness and grace; draw them to Himself; save them, and make them eternally blessed.

Paschal Lamb, by God appointed,
All our sins on Thee were laid;
By almighty Love anointed,
Thou hast full atonement made.
All Thy people are forgiven,
Through the virtue of Thy blood:
Opened is the gate of heaven;
Peace is made 'twixt man and God.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads. Mat. 27: 39. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him. But the other said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Luke 23: 39. 42. 43. Jesus saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! John 19: 26. 27.

They revile; He saves. They wag their heads in order to hurt His feelings; He moves the hearts of sinners in order to do good to them. Yet, while they all, the priests as well as the people, railed at Him; while they all rejected and cursed Him, there was one who prayed to Him. He was, to be sure, only a thief, and no saint; yet his prayer was granted. He did not pray to be delivered from the cross, but that he, after death on the cross, might enter into the kingdom of heaven. It was a large petition. A thief desires the kingdom of heaven! What connection is there between heaven and a thief? Yet his prayer was granted on the spot. The more others curse and scoff, revile and despise, the more trustfully may you pray, and the more will you receive. The fewer they be around you who seek Christ and love Him, the more trustfully may you confess Him; then shall you be received all the more lovingly and be all the more welcome. Though you regard yourself as unworthy of grace and the kingdom of heaven as the thief, if only your heart be penitent and believing as his heart was; if you are not ashamed to confess yourself before all the world as a malefactor guilty of death, and Christ as Lord of the kingdom, as your Rescuer and Savior, then you will receive the

same answer and promise as the thief received. He condemned himself, and Christ declared him saved. He sailed against the tide of the whole world; he did not conform himself to the railing priests nor to the reviling people, nor to the scoffer who was crucified with him; but he yearned for Christ and His kingdom, and it all became his portion. Go and do likewise. When Christ on the cross looked to sinners and received them, how can He forget His friends and loved ones? His words to Mary and John bear clear testimony to His unchangeable love for His friends until the end. He is the most tender friend. No human heart loves as His heart loves.

Jesus sinners doth receive,
When they fall contrite before Him,
When His teachings they believe,
And with new life will adore Him:
Blessed he who can believe
Jesus sinners doth receive.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me. Mat. 27: 45. 46. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and suppplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. Heb. 5: 7.

Without and within densest darkness brooded over Christ. Fierce war raged between light and darkness. He, the Light of the world, was about to destroy the kingdom of darkness; conquer the prince of darkness, and transform the children of the night into the children of light. Therefore He must needs expose Himself to the united assaults of the grim powers of Satan. The struggle must reach its crisis. The light seemed to succumb and darkness to triumph; the light seemed already extinguished; darkness seemed to hold sway. Night shrouded the earth. The day had seemingly vanish. But His patience, His strong inward

crying, and His praying in tears, which now had reached their height, prevailed, conquered everything, and completed the victory. Then He showed how the Christian must conquer by succumbing, and how the enemy of light must succumb by conquering. Here upon the cross, and in these words, we are enabled to behold Christianity in its true manifestation. When all lights go out and the day is shrouded in black night; when God has transformed Himself into an enemy and an opponent and seems to be on the side of the enemy, so that even he who has the strongest faith in God, can offer up nothing but complaints and "strong crying," then victory is near and triumph sure. Tarry here, O soul! This "strong crying," this praying in tears in Christ's deepest agony, has saved you from eternal darkness and death. Thus your Redeemer must be forsaken and troubled that you might be accepted and comforted. All your comfort and peace flow from this fountain of the agony of Jesus.

How art Thou pale with anguish,
With sore abuse and scorn!
How does that visage languish,
Which once was bright as morn!
What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered,
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But Thine the deadly pain.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst: and they filled a spunge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. John 19: 28. 29.

After the dark hour in which He had been forsaken by God, Jesus now had in His heart the consciousness of victory. He saw in spirit the accomplishment of all things, the liberation of captive humanity and the discomfiture of all its enemies. Hence He says, "I thirst." For what does He thirst? O Thou eternal One, upon whom the eyes of all do wait; Thou who openest Thine

hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing; Thou who givest "waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to Thy people, Thy chosen" (Is. 43: 20); Thou who turnedst water into wine, and madest the water spring forth out of the rock to slake the thirst of men and beasts; Thou who givest rain on dry ground and keepest the waters of the sea together as in a heap; Thou who measurest the waters with Thine hand—for what dost Thou thirst? For our salvation; for the blessedness of Thy redeemed people. But how do they quench Thy thirst? Thou thirstest, and they give Thee vinegar This is the true picture which shows how men render thanks to their Creator and Redeemer, and how they reward His benefits. How many are the varieties of fruit and beverage which He has created, with which man may quench his thirst and be refreshed! But now when the Creator thirsts for us and in our stead, we give Him vinegar. Yet, as He Himself would have it thus; and thus it was written (Ps. 69: 22). This burning thirst is become to us a well that never runs dry; a river of life and a most blessed fount of refreshing. He, the Good Shepherd, thirsted thus that we might "lie down in green pastures" and that He might lead us "beside still waters" (Ps. 23: 2). He, the Fountain of Life, was dried up that we might "draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation" (Is. 12: 3.) He must suffer from thirst, that He might invite all and say, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Is. 55:1.) "For in that day (after His thirst) shall a living water go out from Jerusalem, out from Golgotha where He suffered the burning thirst and languished" (Zech. 14:8.) Thou, Jesus, must needs thirst, that Thou mightest say, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst. He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of life freely. I will sprinkle clean water upon you" (John 4: 14; 7: 38; Rev. 21: 6; Ezek. 36: 2). Such water, such refreshment, hath Thy thirst prepared

for us. We all drink from Thy thirst. Thy languishing refreshes us.

Rejected and despised of men,
Behold a man of woe!
And grief His close companion still
Through all His life below!

Yet all the grief He felt was ours,
Ours were the woes He bore:
Pangs, not His own, His spotless soul
With bitter anguish tore.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. John 19: 30; Luke 23: 46.

Here bow the knee and worship! A greater word has never been uttered on earth; a word richer in results has never been heard. My soul, what is "finished?" Your redemption and eternal salvation; your justification and sanctification, and glory; the blotting out of your sins; the living hope of eternal glory; your sonship and heirship with God, yea, your second creation, or re-creation; your transformation from a child of darkness to a child of light; from the slave of sin to a child of grace; from a prey of hell to a member of the household of God and a fellow citizen of the saints in heaven; from being the haunt of an unclean spirit to the temple of God, the abode of the Holy Trinity. Who can express by name all that the Son of God has "finished" by His sufferings and death? All this is now yours; it is "finished" for you, prepared and ready; you may possess it and enjoy it; it is intended for you and offered to you in the Gospel. What would be more precious to the Son of God, whom the accomplishment of all this cost so much suffering, yea even death, than that you already had it all in your possession and enjoyed it, that He might see in your heart all these fruits of His redeeming work? The whole day He stretches forth His pierced hands to you, that He may pour into your lap and im-

part to you all that He has won by His bitter agony. "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it," says the Lord. (Ps. 81: 10). You shall be "abundantly satisfied with the fatness of His house" and "you shall drink of the river of His pleasures"(Ps. 36: 8). Believe, love, hope. Give yourself with your whole soul to the Author and Finisher of your salvation, and all shall be yours, yours eternally. Do not glory in Christ and His grace with your lips only; but let your heart be filled with the power, the fulness and the grace of Christ's redemption; then your mouth will overflow with His praises.

'Tis done! the precious ransom's paid.
"Receive my soul," He cries;
See where He bows His sacred head!
He bows His head and dies!

SATURDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT.

Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, — — — who also maketh intercession for us. Rom. 8: 34.

"Who is he that condemneth?" Thus asks Paul. May you also ask thus when sin and Satan assail you and would deprive you of all comfort and faith. Flee to the cross of Christ. Consider Him and see how He bows His head and dies. He inclines His head to you; He dies that you may live. O sacred sojourn at the death of Jesus upon the cross! As the bees rest in the flowers and bury themselves deeply in their calyxes and absorb their sweet nectar, so every pious soul lies down upon the cross of Christ, settles his heart and thoughts deeply, as deeply as possible, into the cup of Christ's woe and atoning love, and absorbs from the eternal fountain of healing all comfort in life and death. What greater comfort could the Father bestow upon sinful men than that He let His Son die for them upon the cross? Who can now impute to us our sins? Who can judge or condemn us when the offended One, against whom we have sinned, who alone would have the right to condemn and punish, has permitted Himself to be condemned and exe-

cuted in behalf of the sinners deserving of condemnation and punishment? The judge Himself dies for the malefactor. Who then shall prosecute and judge the malefactor? The Lord, the Judge, suffers the punishment of the servant. Who, then, shall punish the servant? The One that has been wronged prays for the wrongdoer. Who, then, shall condemn the sinner?

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine;
Now hear me while I pray;
Take all my guilt away;
Oh, let me from this day
Be wholly Thine.

THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY.

Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation (Israel) only, but that he should gather togetner in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. John 11: 51. 52. **To make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross.** Eph. 2: 15. 16.

The Messiah of the Jews should not only blot out the sins of the Jews, but the sins of all men and reunite with God and mutually reconcile all those who had been separated from God, and had become mutually discordant. His soul's separation from His body, His death then, was the reuniting and the eternal connecting of all things separated. His soul was poured out: thus He "gathered together" and united all who were "scattered abroad." Now His death, His pierced heart, shall be the point of connection for all the hearts of men. Beneath His cross, from which salvation and life issue forth for all, should we unite, of whatever people or of whatever religion we may be. Having a Shepherd who has given His life for all the sheep, we should be one fold. All separations, sects and schisms, are a dishonor to Christ and His death. For He died and caused His heart to be sundered, that all who are separated may be united in Him. Oh, that His blood and death, aside from which no man can be saved,

may soon gather together all the scattered children of God! For they are yet far from each other, separated by petty non-essentials. Let us look away from everything else and only look unto Him and His cross. Then we become one body under one head; then we shall have peace inwardly and outwardly and be one new man only. But the old man, which yet possesses so much life, causes separation, and will cause separation everywhere, until he is slain on the cross of Christ.

Lord, grant that all who worship Thee
May in Thy love united be;
And that in unity they may
Proclaim Thee, Lord, from day to day.

MONDAY AFTER THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY.

Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? Luke 23: 28. 31. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 1 Pet. 4: 18.

The pious women followers of Jesus wept when their Master was led through the crowded streets of the so-called Holy City as a malefactor condemned to death. And who would not have wept? Who ought not weep as often as he thinks, "Such disgrace my innocent Savior must suffer because of me, a sinner worthy of disgrace; and yet I reward Him so poorly. It is so difficult for me to suffer even an insigificant dishonor for His sake." The Savior foresaw this, and while He does not blame them for shedding tears, yet He does not say that they ought not weep. For they ought to weep, but not for Him. He does not need our tears. We should weep for ourselves. You surely do not ask why? If you know your heart, you will find enough for which to weep, yea, even to weep blood if that were possible. "For if they do such things in a green tree," since God because of sin did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up to such dishonor, to the cross and to death,—"what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke

23: 31). What will God do to the sinner who will not be softened, nor converted and saved by this great love of God? What will He do to the false Christians who weep, but who do not cling to the Savior with their whole heart; who live to this world and to themselves and not to Him who died for them? Thou dry tree, thou unfruitful Christian, who without heart, without repentance, and without love, callest Jesus thy Savior and sayest, "Lord, Lord," but doest not His will, who boastest of the righteousness and the merits of Christ, and yet art satisfied with the righteousness of the Pharisees; thou dry tree, become green once more! Graft thyself by repentance, faith and love into the green tree of the cross of Christ, into the fellowship of His sufferings and death. Then thou shalt not be consumed, but thou shalt escape the eternal fire.

Then for all that wrought our pardon,
For Thy sorrows deep and sore,
For Thine anguish in the garden,
I will thank Thee evermore;
Thank Thee with my latest breath
For Thy sad and cruel death,
For that last and bitter cry;
Praise Thee evermore on high.

TUESDAY AFTER THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. — — For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Rom. 5: 8. 10.

How could love better assert itself and glorify itself than by dying for its enemies, for sinners? Will love now destroy us and give us up to death after we have acknowledged and believed it, and have it dwelling in our hearts? What a pledge of bliss and eternal life has it not given us! Love is our pledge, our hope, our eternal life—here by anticipation and hereafter in full enjoyment. Since God sought and found us when we fled from Him, will He flee from us and turn us

away when we seek and find Him? Since God effected our atonement at the cost of the blood and death of His Son, shall He again cast us away? Shall He not rather save us, inasmuch as our salvation will glorify His Son's life and exalt the glory of the Son? Since God has been good to us when we were yet His enemies, shall He reward us with evil after we are become His friends? When we loved sin and served Satan He died for us; will He now slay and destroy us when we love and serve Him? When He loved even unto death those who hated Him, how much more will He not love those who love Him? Let us therefore no more depart from the cross of Christ, that we may learn the love of God and know it in all its greatness and glory. May we learn to love Him, hope and trust in Him.

Jesus! the very thought of Thee
With gladness fills my breast;
But dearer far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.
And those who find Thee, find a bliss
Nor tongue nor pen can show:
The love of Jesus—what it is,
None but His loved ones know.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY.

For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Heb. 10: 14. **In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, for sin and for uncleanness.** Zech. 13: 1; Heb. 10: 22.

The death of our Savior is "an offering" and "a fountain": a sacrifice for the reconciliation and the justification of the sinner; a fountain for health and for perfect healing from all vice—in all respects a perfect redemption, freedom from sin, and sanctification. It takes the guilt, the penalty, from the conscience and destroys the root of evil in the heart, so that it can not break out again and become dominating. It is a sacrifice that atones for all sin in the world. There is no necessity for any sinner to despair, no matter how great his

sins may be, yea, even though they were more numerous than grains of sand on the sea-shore, drops in the ocean, or leaves on the trees. The offering of Jesus blots out all his guilt, bears all his penalty and effects a perfect reconciliation for him. It is also just as sufficient for sanctification. Whenever the traces of sin show themselves in us, we need only go to this fountain and draw from this well of health from which the water of life issues forth; it washes away all our uncleanness, and gives new strength to recover from the sickness of sin and to grow strong in soul and spirit. This is the true "Fountain of Health," the only one deserving the name. Blessed is he who wishes not only to be cleansed, but also to be healed.

Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling.
Naked came to Thee for dress,
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

THURSDAY AFTER THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY.

Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds. Jer. 30: 12. 17. With his stripes we are healed. Is. 53: 5; 1 Pet. 2: 24.

Here the Lord God tells you whom you are and what is your condition. May you hear and understand. You are desperately evil; your wounds are "incurable." Who would dare say such things but the Lord, whom you dare not contradict? He knows you thoroughly. Rest assured that God does not exaggerate. There is no salvation for you if He does not save you. But however miserable and desperate your condition may be, He yet does not cast you away. He says, "I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds." If you believe Him as to the first, namely, that you are completely depraved and incurable, then believe Him also as to the second, namely, that He yet will heal you. Do not deny nor conceal your depravity. Do

not cover your wounds with hypocrisy: that will never heal them. Give glory to God; confess that His Word is the truth, that you are utterly depraved; then He will bestow upon you salvation and life. By what means? By His wounds—by the wounds of Jesus. He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; "with His stripes we are healed" (Is. 53:5). When we feel bruised and wounded in spirit, we shall not lack salvation. He who denies his depravity and will not acknowledge his wickedness, or who thinks that he can heal himself, or who covers his wounds with the words, "the wounds of Jesus," without suffering himself to be thoroughly and completely healed, his hurt is more than hopeless, his wounds can never be healed. Do not make the wounds of Jesus a plaster of concealment for your wounds. May they be healing, healing to you. There are many who say, "We are healed by His wounds;" yet they are not healed, but full of wounds in their conscience. If, however, you have actually received forgiveness through His wounds, then remain in His wounds, and by their power beware of sin, lest sin inflict on you fresh wounds and you become a tree twice dead; it is difficult to revive such a tree.

O depth of love, in which, past finding,
My sins through Christ's blood disappear;
This is for wounds the safest binding,
There is no condemnation here;
For Jesus' blood forever cries:
"Free mercy, mercy!" to the skies.

FRIDAY AFTER THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY.

Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge — — that the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither. Josh. 20: 2. 3. But if a man came presumptuously upon his neighbor, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die. Ex. 21: 14. O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs. Cant. 2: 14. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain. Is. 4: 6.

The "cities of refuge" in Israel, where the slayer found safety and shelter, when the killing was done unwittingly, but which did not help the murderer who slew his neighbors intentionally and in guile, are a type of the wounds of Jesus. His wounds, like a place of refuge, are open to every sinner who honestly confesses his sins; they offer him shelter from judgment, death, devil, and hell, which as avengers pursue every sinner and threaten him with eternal destruction. He who takes refuge in the wounds of Jesus because he is weary of sin, and by conversion desires freedom from sin; can not be molested: he is saved. But as the intentional murderer was not safe nor protected even in the temple itself though he should grasp the horns of the altar, but was taken, led away and turned over to the penalty he deserved: so shall neither sinner nor saint console himself with the wounds of Jesus if he do not honestly repent; if he secretly or openly love the world and sin; if he appropriate the wounds and the merit of Jesus with the mouth only and not with the heart. Such a one will be torn away from the altar of the cross, from the wounds of Jesus, which he only talks about, and cast into hell-fire together with the hypocrite. On the other hand, to all who are earnestly seeking salvation, to all zealous, conscientious souls who are deeply concerned about their salvation, the wounds of Jesus are blessed "cities of refuge," "clefts in the rock," "secret places in the stairs," where they are free and safe from the wrath, the penalty, the death, and the hell, which they have merited by their sins. There, in every heat of tribulation, in every need and affliction, they find shadow, coolness, shelter, salvation. Such a place a truly pious soul leaves no more. There it finds eternal joy and rest, all power and complete happiness.

Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, oh! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me

All my trust on Thee is stayed;
All my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

SATURDAY AFTER THE ANNUNCIATION OF MARY.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Rom. 6: 6. I am crucified with Christ. — — But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Gal. 2: 20; 6: 14.

How many statements of the apostle are not readily repeated after him; yet these declarations are seldom heard; and more seldom are they uttered truthfully! The true Christian can not skim over them as the butterfly skims over the flowers, without drawing honey from them. Yet here the best honey will be found. The cross, the crucified One, must be in us if we in truth believe in Him. When this Rock of Salvation is within us, all the billows of raging passion; all the temptations of the flesh, the world, and the devil, will break against it and lose their power. Do not let Christ, His cross and His merits, be to you the servant of sin. Let Christ be the destroyer of sin, who crushes the serpent's head in your soul. When the world, and sin, and every evil inclination, is a cross to you, and you destroy it on the cross of Christ, then are you crucified with Christ; then you can truly glory in the cross of Christ. Thus only can you crucify sin, "the old man." Without Christ and His cross all your endeavors are in vain and all your glorying but shame and injury.

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave and follow Thee;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou, from hence, my soul shalt be:
Perish every fond ambition,
All I've sought, or hoped, or known;
Yet how rich is my condition!
God and heaven are still my own.

PALM SUNDAY.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John 1: 29. **Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.** 1 Pet. 1: 18. 19.

Jesus is "the Lamb" to whom all the messengers of God in the old covenant and in the new covenant have pointed. Even Isaiah, the evangelist of Israel, saw Him and alluded to Him, saying, "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth" (Is. 53: 7). Jesus is the Lamb of God not only because of His silent patience in the deepest and most shameful sufferings, but more especially as the sacrifice and propitiation for our sins. By His blood we are delivered from the bondage of sin and the power of Satan, in order that we should serve the living God. What is more beautiful, more charming and attractive than God's presentation of Him whom He sends into the world to save us, as a lamb? Before a judge and a lord we would be afraid and tremble. But a lamb attracts even children and is pleasing to all men. How good the Lord is also in this respect! Does hell terrify you? does Satan frighten you? does the terror of the judgment threaten you? Then look to "the Lamb." John points to Him. But that which above all else makes this Lamb so attractive to us, is that He takes away our sins, that He was slain as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.

Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!
Just as I am; Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe;
O Lamb of God, I come!

MONDAY AFTER PALM SUNDAY.

Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Rom. 6: 8. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. 1 Thes. 5: 10.

Christ has bought us in that He died for us. We are to belong to Christ, belong eternally to Him. For this reason He died. Woe to him who turns away from Christ, who pretends that he believes on Him and who yet does not live unto Him! He who lives to Him, or in Him; who lives together with Him in such a manner as St. Paul would have; as the disciple with the master, in a house, in a workshop; he who lives thus intimately with Him, finds it easy to be done with sin. If sin comes, the disciple only looks to the Master, and he is through with it: sin betakes itself away. If sin comes again, we are again permitted to turn to the Master, the oftener the better. A look at Jesus means a thunderbolt for sin; it acts, besides, as a preservative against sin. The life together with Jesus is the most blessed life. If men only knew it, they would wish for nothing better. Whether we wake or sleep—in bed or in the grave—whether we wake here or hereafter—we shall always be together with Him. We shall be perfectly unable to get Him out of our eye, our heart and mind, nor will we try to do so. For this reason Christ died. So precious were you in His eyes. Such a life His death will bestow upon you, here and hereafter; for it shall be and remain an eternal, unbroken life together with Him.

Our restless spirits yearn for Thee,
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;
Glad, that Thy gracious smile we see,
Blest, that our faith can hold Thee fast.

TUESDAY AFTER PALM SUNDAY.

Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. — — Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but

committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. — — Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. 1 Pet. 2: 21-24.

The sufferings of Jesus, however regarded, are unspeakably valuable to us. He suffered for us in every respect; first and chiefly, as our Atoner for the remission of our sins, since by faith His merits become my merits. I see Him as the Lamb of God making atonement for my sins and taking them away; by His obedience even unto death He procures for me a gracious God and Father in heaven. Secondly, Christ suffered and died to earn for us and to bestow upon us grace, spirit, power and life, for the sanctification and renewal of the inner man. His death is a fountain of life, a healing well, where all who drink are healed. Thirdly, Christ suffered and died as "an example" for us and for our consolation in suffering and death, that we may look to Him and walk in His steps, as the Apostles plainly write. He who regards Christ as the Atoner only and not also as our example, does not think and act in an apostolic manner any more than they who present Him as an example only and as a paragon of virtue, but never as the Atoner. He is everything to us. We must in no wise dismember Christ, but receive Him entire, as He presents Himself and as the Apostles preach Him to us.

Glory in the highest be
To the blessed Trinity,
For the Gospel from above,
For the word that "God is love."

WEDNESDAY AFTER PALM SUNDAY.

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. 1 Cor. 11: 28. 29.

Self-examination is necessary always, every day and every hour. Least of all must it be neglected at the cele-

bration of the Lord's Supper or postponed until a more convenient season. At communion it is altogether indispensable and so essential and necessary that life and death, blessing and curse, grace and judgment, are dependent upon it. According to St. Paul, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, without self-exmaination, or (which to him is essentially the same) receiving it "unworthily," results in severe judgments, and he refers to facts and examples from his own time, showing how such unworthy celebration had caused many to incur bodily and spiritual weakness, disease, and death itself. Thus the Lord chastises those who without self-examination thoughtlessly and unworthily receive that body which He sacrificed in death for them, and the precious blood which He shed for them; they do not "discern" the difference between His body and common food. Do not bring disease upon yourself; do not eat judgment and death in the Lord's supper; you may as easily find death there as you may find life and salvation. Strong food is not for the sick; it only makes them still more ill and miserable; it may even kill them. The sick should by no means eat the same food as the well. That which furthers the health of the healthy and serves them for nourishment and strength, becomes poison and death to the sick. Beware therefore, lest by your thoughtlessness and impiety you change that food of eternal life, that divine bread, that heavenly manna, into judgment and damnation. Prove yourself; examine yourself. Pray for light and self-knowledge. Confess and acknowledge your sins before God and before your offended neighbor. Mend the offence you have given as far as you are able; at least do not give new offence by a thoughtless and disorderly life when you draw near to the holy table. Reconcile yourself to God, to your neighbor and to your own heart. Seek to re-establish peace within and without. Make it manifest in an unequivocal manner that you are in earnest as to your penitence, conversion, faith and betterment. Show that you know and feel to whom you draw near, namely the righteous God, who has eyes as flames of fire and who tries the hearts and reins, who knows the secret designs of your heart.

O God unseen, yet ever near,
Thy presence may we feel;
And thus, inspired with holy fear,
Before Thine altar kneel.
Here may Thy faithful people know
The blessings of Thy love;
The streams that through the desert flow,
The manna from above.

MAUNDY THURSDAY.

With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. Luke 22: 15.

Jesus heartily longs for you, dear guest at the Lord's table. He hungers more for you than you hunger for Him, as if He were the one to eat and as if you were the food. Hence He says, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Who was present then? A poor woman who was a sinner (John 4). Thus it is really food for which He hungers, when you come to His table with deep yearning and desire to enter into close communion with Him; to be united with Him in the most thorough manner; to remember Him and to present Him in such a way, in faith, to your spiritual eye, as if you saw Him hanging upon the cross, as if He gave Himself to you, as if you saw His blood flow, saw Him bow His head and die for you. The Savior has something great in mind by this Supper. He does not give us empty symbols of His death. He gives Himself to you. Therefore He wants no small and narrow hearts, but enlarged hearts; true faith; an intense hunger; that He may give much, all—even Himself. The more room you have for Him, the more you will receive. The greater your longing, the more you will partake of Christ (Heb. 3: 14).

For such consoling Supper, Lord,
Be praised throughout all ages!
Preserve it pure, since 'gainst the word
"This is!" the world so rages,
Grant, that Thy body and Thy blood
Be my sole comfort and sweet food,
In my last hour. Yea, Amen!

GOOD FRIDAY.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. — — For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousnes of God in him. 2 Cor. 5: 19. 21.

God so loved the world, the sinful, faithless, deeply fallen and ungrateful world, that He sacrificed for it His innocent, holy and righteous Son, as if the great and infamous sinner were dearer to Him than His most beloved Son. He who today sees the Son of God dying upon the cross for all sinners, slain for the dead, and does not learn to read the Holy Scriptures inviting all men to the great Supper, beseeching them, "Be ye reconciled to God!" he who does not learn to read this upon the cross, and does not here learn to understand and believe, will never learn. For that which even Moses realized and concerning which he said, "Truly the Lord loves the people," is here written in letters of flame; on the cross it is preached as loudly, intelligibly, and effectually as possible. Oh, may you all draw near to the cross of Christ on Golgotha! May you consider Him in the spirit, until that fulness of love by which God loved us in the death of His Son, shall have penetrated your heart, spirit and soul, marrow and bones, and your whole being; and you from your whole soul may say, "We love Him because He loved us first." Here words only are of no avail. You yourself must go to Golgotha; you must see the Son of love bleed upon the cross for you; you must tarry with Him, your eyes intently fixed upon Him. His blood, His death, His wounds, the bowing of His head, shall speak to you. Pay close attention, and let everything else in you keep silence.

O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame bowed down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns Thy only crown!
O sacred Head, what glory,
What bliss, till now, was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory;
I joy to call Thee mine.

SATURDAY BEFORE EASTER.

Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. And Joseph took the body and laid it in his own new tomb. John 19: 40. 41. Mat. 27: 59. 60.

The sufferings of Christ began in a garden and ended in a garden. Blessed garden that received His body, sacrificed for us! Blessed grave above all other graves, that contained His body, who shall call forth and quicken all who lie in graves unto the resurrection of life or of judgment! Blessed Joseph to whom it was given to take down the body of Jesus from the cross and lay it in that new tomb! Who would not envy thee? And yet we have much more than thou hast, when we by faith have Christ dwelling in our hearts—when we in the sacrament receive the living body of Jesus in our hearts. Oh, that our hearts may cease to be sepulchres of sin! May our hearts become the sepulchres of Christ, to contain Him forever, swathed in faith, and sealed forever with His ardent love! May we bear in mind what St. Paul says: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death" (Rom. 6: 3. 4). He repeats this in another place (Col. 2: 12). We should no more serve sin, no more let sin rule over us. By Christ's death we are dead and crucified from sin, and have borne sin to its grave. Do not revive it, beloved. Let sin continue to be slain and buried through all eternity. Cast out of your hearts the dead body of sin and evil desires, and receive Jesus, that He may forever live and rule in you.

Jesus, tender Savior,
Hast Thou died for me?
Make me very thankful
In my heart to Thee.
When the sad, sad story
Of Thy grief I read,

Make me very sorry
For my sins indeed.

Now I know Thou livest,
And dost plead for me;
Make me very thankful
In my prayers to Thee.
Soon I hope in glory
At Thy side to stand;
Make me fit to meet Thee
In that happy land.

EASTER.

And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and said, Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Mat. 28: 2; Mark 16: 6; Luke 24: 5. 6.

At the coming of Jesus to this world, angels were the messengers (evangelists) who proclaimed the great joy that the Savior was born. At His new birth, when He entered from death into life, angels again proclaim His resurrection from the grave, His second appearing among the living. They kindly reproach the pious women who sought among the dead the Lord of Life that was risen. What joy it must have been to these loving souls that it was vouchsafed to them first to proclaim this great, eternal Gospel in a world of tombs; that they were the first heralds of the kingdom to cry, "He is risen!" If the angels, who are not chiefly concerned, rejoice because of this message, how much more ought we to rejoice! For He died for us; He rose again for us; He lives for us and we with Him, if we rise with Him and walk in the newness of life. But how can we rejoice when we continue to lie in the bonds of sin and death? Then we "seek the living among the dead," and will not find Him. He is to be found among the living only, who are quickened and risen with Him from the tomb of perdition.

Jesus, my Redeemer lives!
I, too, unto life must waken:
He will have me where He is:
Shall my courage then be shaken?
Shall I fear? Or could the Head
Rise and leave its members dead?

THE SECOND DAY OF EASTER.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. — — — Why are ye troubled? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. John 20: 19. Luke 24: 38. 39.

The disciples did not hasten to the world when their Master was dead and lay in the grave; on the contrary, they shut themselves in, for they feared the world, howbeit their fear was not altogether noble; they feared that they also might be apprehended and crucified, and now they had neither the inclination nor the power to meet such a fate. Yet this fear was beneficial to them in that they were thereby protected from the world, quietly awaiting their Savior. If Jesus shall arise in you, and you shall make certain that He lives in you, you must first shut out the world and keep your heart open to your Savior only. Further, you must also be desirous of seeking company with those who, like yourself, wait for the consolation of Israel, who will not be satisfied with a dead Christ, but desire to have the living Jesus. Among the dead you are and remain dead; among the living you live. When, as the disciples, you are isolated and disengaged from the world, absorbed in quiet expectation, prayer and supplication, united with all the pious and faithful, longing for Jesus, then will He reveal Himself in spirit in the midst of your heart, and bring you that peace which surpasseth all understanding, the real Easter-prize, which He won through His great struggle and victory. Thus you shall be assured that it is He Himself and no phantom, no ghost.

Jesus lives! I know full well,
Naught from me His love shall sever;
Life, nor death, nor powers of hell,
Part me now from Christ for ever.
God will be a sure defence:
This shall be my confidence.

TUESDAY AFTER EASTER.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. 1 Pet. 1: 3. 4. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 1 Cor. 15: 54. 55.

The resurrection is the essential part of the Christian doctrine; on it depends our faith and our hope, as St. Paul explains (1 Cor. 15). If Christ were not risen, there would be no Christianity; our faith would be useless and our hope empty, the doctrine false, and the whole Gospel in vain; then we would not know how we stand in this life and in the life to come, which latter we could not believe nor hope for. But the resurrection establishes all that we as Christians believe, hope, and love. Above all, Christ's resurrection is to us a regeneration unto "a lively hope" of eternal life in that it swallows up all fear of death and elucidates for us the life to come in our risen Savior. He is our Head if we as members of His body cling to Him in living faith and in ardent love. Seeing our Head conquer death, hell and Satan, and trample under foot these terrible enemies of mankind, we are so far from losing courage that we rather triumph together with our Head and rejoice in the victory. Not for Himself, but for us, has He conquered our enemies. The victory is ours; consequently the triumph is ours. When a hero defeats and destroys the enemies of the kingdom, the victory and triumph belong to the whole kingdom; the humblest inhabitant of the kingdom rejoices, for he also reaps the benefits as well as the con-

queror himself. For this reason Christians rejoice with Christ in His glorious Resurrection.

Now let the heavens be joyful!
Let earth her song begin!
Let all the world keep triumph,
And all that is therein:
In grateful exultation
Their notes let all things blend,
For Christ the Lord hath risen,
Our joy that hath no end.

WEDNESDAY AFTER EASTER.

Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. 2 Cor. 5: 15. **Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.** Acts 3: 26. **Purge out therefore the old leaven; that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.** 1 Cor. 5: 7.

As the foundation of our hope of eternal life lies in the resurrection of Christ, so the foundation and cause of our quickening into a new life lies therein. How can we hope to triumph with Him over sin, death and grave, devil and hell, if we, of our own free will, continue to be the slaves of sin, devil and death? How can we celebrate the eternal Easter-joy with our glorified Easter-lamb if we do not purge out the "old leaven?" The old leaven, our flesh and blood, sin and our evil nature, can not inherit the kingdom of God. He who has conquered our enemies without, can also conquer them within. He who died and rose again for us can and will bestow upon us sufficient power to die from sin and to live unto Him, to arise with Him, to purge out all leaven of malice and wickedness, and to become "a new lump," full of sincerity and truth.

Our hearts be pure from evil,
That we may see aright
The Lord in rays eternal
Of Resurrection's light;

And listening to His accents,
May hear, so calm and plain,
His own All hail!—and hearing,
May raise the victor strain.

THURSDAY AFTER EASTER.

And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away. Mark 16: 2. 3. 4.

The women had risen "very early," that they might seek Him without fear and loss of time. Neither the guard, nor the large stone, which they could not roll away, nor the seal, which the Pharisees had put upon it, nor any other anxiety could deter their ardent love. Oh, when love seeks, it always finds, for it "believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," that it may reach the goal. Love says, "I must find Him; I must have Him, even though there were a thousand stones, yea, mountains, in the way." And where God sees such earnestness in love, He removes the stones that we ourselves cannot lift, and casts into the sea the mountains that we ourselves cannot cross. Although you find great stones on your way, and many hindrances in your course, as the women at the sepulchre, yet if you do not find Christ at once, wait longingly, arise early and do not give up until you have surely found Him. You may each day have an Easter-morning, an Easter-joy, if you each morning arise early and seek as longingly, wait as untiringly, and yearn as intensely and ardently for the risen Savior, as did Mary. "He that seeketh shall find."

He lives to silence all my fears,
He lives to wipe away my tears,
He lives to calm my troubled heart,
He lives all blessings to impart.

FRIDAY AFTER EASTER.

And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. 1 Cor. 6: 14. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Rom. 8: 10. 11.

You believe that Christ is risen from the dead; you believe that you also shall arise; but do you have the Spirit that raised up Jesus? Do you have the testimony of the Spirit of Christ to the fact that you are quickened and raised up from the grave of sin? Is the risen Christ in you? Has He quickened, animated and inspired you? Does your spirit live because of His righteousness? If so, then let your body die: you shall rise, nevertheless, as Christ arose. But to believe on Christ, on His resurrection and our resurrection, without having the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, is hopeless. To comfort ourselves with the coming Resurrection and yet to be dead, without that Spirit which alone can quicken us and make us partakers of the first resurrection in the life in Christ, is a self-delusion from which we, the sooner the better, should suffer ourselves to be healed. If, on the other hand, Christ be in us (and we know that He is in us by the Spirit He has given us, by the unction and the incomparable and incomprehensible peace, by the love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts), and if we are truly quickened and alive in Christ, living Christians, who walk aright, the Lord will no more suffer us to remain in the grave than He suffered Himself to remain there. Where the Head is, there must also the living members be.

He lives, and grants me daily breath;
He lives, and I shall conquer death;
He lives, my mansion to prepare;
He lives, to bring me safely there.

SATURDAY AFTER EASTER.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will. Heb. 13: 20. 21. As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. 6: 4.

Why did God permit the Shepherd to be slain? Why did He raise Him up again? Only for the sake of the sheep. The Father loves the scattered sheep and could not let them pursue the wrong paths. Therefore He raised up again the Shepherd and gave the sheep back to Him. Are the sheep nevertheless to be lost? Will He not for the sake of the quickened Shepherd also endeavor to quicken the sheep and to give them new life, that the Shepherd and the flock may be one and together enter the eternal sheepfold? We should trust in the same power and walk in the same power, and lead a new life by the same power by which Jesus was raised from the dead. Such power is ours if we only use it and do not undertake to build on our power or purposely desire to become powerless that we may remain in the death of sin. Look to your great Shepherd. He was bruised, but He lives again, lives forever and shall die no more. The linen clothes and the napkin that were tied and wound about Him in death, He has loosened and buried in the grave (John 20: 6. 7). He went forth free. Now nothing on earth binds Him except His love to us. Thus, dear soul, should you also arise and break the fetters by which you are chained to the earth, the world and sin. Let them lie in the grave of this world, and follow your Shepherd in His ascension to the heavenly places whereunto He has quickened you.

Jesus lives! Henceforth is death
But the gate of life immortal;
This shall calm my trembling breath,
When I pass its gloomy portal.
Faith shall cry, as fails each sense,
"Lord, Thou art my confidence!"

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. John 16: 22. There when the disciples were assembled — — came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and said unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. John 20: 19. 20. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. v. 29.

The disciples were glad to see Jesus again, as the wise men from the East were glad once more to see the star which they had lost sight of while visiting Herod. To this day no man has taken their joy from them. Who shall now take it from them? He who knows this joy loathes all other joys which do not proceed from it or lead to it. Have you been made a partaker of that joy which consists in knowing the living Jesus risen in you—that He dwells in you? Have you ever been sad and miserable because you did not possess Jesus, or because you had lost Him? Have you ever, like the disciples, gathered yourself in the room of your heart, to wait for the Lord and to be made a partaker of Him? Then He must already have entered your heart, or He will soon come to visit you. Only have patience, and you shall know no joy like the joy of possessing Him. True, you cannot here taste the joy of seeing as the disciples saw Him: but that will not in the least impair the true and far greater joy of possessing Him and of tasting His nearness. The fact that you do not see Him and yet believe, and through faith have Him dwelling in your heart, will enhance your joy, and so far from causing you any disadvantage, will bring you all the greater bliss.

Jesus, our only joy be Thou!
As Thou our prize wilt be;
Jesus, be Thou our glory now,
And through eternity.

MONDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plague;

O grave, I will be thy destruction. Hos. 13: 14. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Gen. 3: 15. I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. John 11: 25.

Let him who fears death and the grave hasten to Christ, who stands so close at hand and cries, "Come, I will ransom thee from the power of the grave; I will redeem thee from death." He who does not believe Him who fearlessly says to death, "I will be thy plague," and to the grave, "I will be thy destruction;" who says, "Whosoever believeth in me shall never die; I am the life; he that believeth in me, unto him will I give eternal life;" who "through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their life subject to bondage" (Heb. 2: 14. 15); he who would rather be in fear of death and the grave and like a slave serve the miserable lusts of the flesh, his evil inclinations, and enjoy the short time of this corruptible life; he who does not believe Christ, I say, must desire his own destruction, his eternal ruin more than life and salvation; he must be terribly blinded by the god of this world, so that he does not see, and will not see, the clear light that shines forth in the Resurrection of Christ and invites us to the most blessed triumph over death and the grave, over sin and the devil. Even though the grave regard us as its own, even though death govern us as its slaves, yet they must let us pass free and untouched if we only will. We can find a "plague" and "destruction" for them by which they must perish. Why do you fear death? Because you love the sting of death which is sin. Rather take the medicine which is a plague to death and a destruction to the grave, which kills death in you; rather take Chrhist, and you shall live and be saved.

He lives to silence all my fears,
He lives to wipe away my tears,
He lives to calm my troubled heart,
He lives, all blessings to impart.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The angel said, Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter. — — — In Galilee you shall see him. Mark 16: 7. The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. Luke 24: 34.

The most remarkable fact in the narrative concerning the resurrection of the Lord is, as the evangelists more especially note, that He first revealed Himself to the greatest sinners, namely, Magdalene and Peter. Beloved, this is not written without a definite purpose in the story of Jesus. "Did He appear to Simon, first and particularly to him?" you ask in wonder. No one had caused Him more sadness than Peter. No one denied Him more shamefully. No one acted so cowardly and faithlessly toward Him in spite of all the warnings and admonitions the Lord had given him. Very true; he did not deserve it; his fall was too great. But behold, Peter "wept bitterly." No one felt his weakness and unfaithfulness more deeply than he. No one was so afraid. No one waited so painfully and with such longing as he. How he hastened together with John to get to the sepulchre first when he heard the alarming news of the Lord's missing body! How he ran first into the sepulchre! Behold, all this the Savior saw and knew. He does not only see your fall, your denial, and your unfaithfulness, but also your fears, your sorrow, and your earnest desire to be pardoned, comforted and received by Him again. Oh, be of good courage, ye hearts who are deeply bowed down and broken because of your sins! When the Savior visits and comforts His own, He first visits and comforts you. For He knows that you have more need than others.

Forgiveness, peace, joy, righteousness,
On earth and there in heaven—
These are the Easter-spoils that bless
The hearts to Jesus given.
So we, His heirs, wait patiently,
Until our bodies fashioned be
Like His own glorious body.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping, saying, They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. John 20: 11—14.

He who seeks as Mary sought will find as Mary found. Ye who seek and do not find the Lord who above all else is worthy of seeking, learn a lesson here from the seeking Mary. The art is easy; everyone can learn it, and it brings the greatest gain. Those who weep for Him shall find Him. This is proven by this instance and it will always prove true. Tears that well up from the heart and are shed for His sake, never fail of their purpose. For they are unquestionable testimony to the fact that Jesus is at the heart knocking; otherwise our heart would not be concerned about Him. A longing for Jesus can be awakened in our heart by no one but by Himself. He who awakens our heart must be near our heart. However, as was the case with Mary, you do not always know Him before He calls you by name. He who with such heartfelt sorrow regrets the loss of the Lord; mourns Him as honestly; seeks Him as earnestly; looks around for Him as longingly as this loving soul, will soon find Him. Yes, dear soul, before you are done weeping; before you turn around, He stands there and greets you as He alone can greet you. Such a greeting surely deserves all the trouble your seeking may have caused you.

O hope of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek!
To those who fall, how kind Thou art,
How good to those who seek.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me

where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni: which is to say, Master. John 20: 15. 16.

Indeed, He has "borne" Himself hence. He has raised Himself from the grave. Where has He laid Himself? Mary, in your heart. For he who seeks Him as you have done, already possesses Him. You will fetch Him from afar, and He stands before you. You do not recognize Him, and yet you love Him so unutterably. What a question is this, "Where hast thou laid Him?" My heart, ask Him that question often when He has withdrawn Himself from thee. But ask thyself also this question when you have laid Him away, when you have forsaken Him. For it is often the heart itself that takes Him away; then He will let you seek a long time. If, however, we do not tire, then He tires. He cannot let us go so long a time, seeking Him in sorrow. He comes and calls us by name. A word from Him, even His voice, will make us just as happy as the word, "Mary," made her happy. How much was not this word to her soul! He who understands the language of love does not need many words nor protestations to believe in love. When once He shall meet me, and call me by name, as He did Mary, I shall be blessed through all eternity. In order that we may once be called by name by Him, we are willing to seek and love Him, and continue to be His until He shall come and call His own sheep by name. (John 10: 3).

When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gathered thick and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood,
His loving kindness, oh, how good!

Often I feel my sinful heart
Prone from my Jesus to depart;
But though I have Him oft forgot,
His loving kindness changes not.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. 1 Cor. 15: 6. 8.

The Savior was seen not only by the chosen apostles and foreordained witnesses of His resurrection, but by all who loved His manifestation and would make sure of His life and His grace; who waited for Him, and put all their trust in Him. This must inspire you with the confidence that He most assuredly will not disappoint you any more than them, if you seek Him earnestly. The eyes of the Lord are upon the earth and look into all hearts now as then. If at that time He saw and found the hearts of the five hundred brethren who longed for Him; if He could not let them languish without consolation, He now also sees you and finds you, if you long for Him. He will assuredly grant you the comfort, joy and strength which you need for your salvation. If there were five thousand such hearts in the land, it would be all the dearer to Him to visit and gladden them all. He does not overlook a single one, not even you.

Be Thou our present joy, O Lord,
Who will be ever our reward:
And as the countless ages flee,
May all our glory be in Thee.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

I know that my redeemer liveth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Job 19: 25. 26. **The Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.** Phil. 3: 20. 21

Even Job knew that the Redeemer lives. He looked with a lively hope into the future, looked beyond death and the grave into a life in which, after the reunion of soul and body, we shall appear before the face of God. With what confidence this champion of faith spoke, even before God had revealed Himself on Sinai and before the light had shone forth on Golgotha! Why do we Christians tremble at the separation of body and soul? For death is nothing but a separation, after which soul and body shall be eternally and gloriously

reunited. The seed of the body must fall into the earth, that it may arise glorious, living, and forever immortal. The glorified body of Christ is a beautiful type, according to which He will transfigure and glorify our bodies. Who should not willingly put off the defiled garment of the flesh to be clothed upon with a new, glorious, and Christ-like body?

I know that my Redeemer lives!
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead,
He lives, my everlasting Head.

He lives to bless me with His love,
He lives to plead for me above,
He lives my hungry soul to feed,
He lives to help in time of need.

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Ps. 23: 1-4. — — — Doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go after that which is lost? Luke 15: 4.

If Jesus be your Shepherd, you must be His sheep. You must "walk in the green pastures" to which He leads you. His Word must be sweeter to you than honey and the honeycomb. You must remain in His flock and shun the goats of the wicked world. The green pastures that belong to this Shepherd are His Word in the Bible; the precious pastures of His sheep are the communings with Him in the spirit. There also flow "the still waters" from which He gives His sheep to drink, the like of which is not found on earth (John 7: 38). But the sheep must follow their Shepherd, if He is to lead them to these waters. The sheep must willingly feed in His green pastures, remain in Him, and commune with Him in child-like confidence. As soon as they leave Him and seek other pastures and other waters, they lose the taste for His pastures and His waters, stray from the flock and perish. But He

cannot let the lost perish forever. He goes after them. He follows after them in all their foolish ways, and does not only readily take them up when He finds them, but carries them as a mother carries her child, upon His shoulders. He rejoices as though He had found a great treasure. If they remain with Him, they lack no good thing. For the Shepherd is exceedingly rich, and as charitable and benevolent as He is rich. He desires that His sheep shall have all that He Himself possesses. He often leads them on dark and uneven roads, yet these are right roads that lead to the fold. Even though they pass through "the valley of the shadow of death," yet His shepherd-staff is their consolation and support, upon which they lean without fear. His rod and His staff are terrible to death and hell, but they are the standards of victory for His sheep. With it they put death and the devil to rout. The wolves flee when you grasp His rod and His "staff." You who are a sheep of Christ, do you know this "rod" and this "staff"? Do you know the rod and the staff of your crucified Shepherd? It is beautiful, it is glorious, stained with His blood. For the Shepherd died upon it for His sheep—for you.

He leads me to the place
Where heavenly pasture grows;
Where living waters gently pass,
And full salvation flows.
While He affords His aid,
I cannot yield to fear;
Thouh I should walk through death's dark shade,
My Shepherd's with me there.

MONDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Thou art fairer than the children of men. — — — Thou liftest me up from the gates of death: that I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in thy salvation. Ps. 45: 2; 9: 13. 14.

Where do I find the most beautiful and striking picture of my Savior, that my soul may rejoice therein? I know of none more attractive than that which the Prophet Isaiah has drawn (Is. 53: 2. 3), where he

says, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised, and we esteemed Him not." This sketch by the prophet was graphically and truly filled out and completed on Golgotha. Precisely where He had no "form nor comeliness" in the eyes of the world, where He was most despised and utterly worthless, He is most beautiful. For this reason He wins the prize above all others. If we pass through heaven and earth and seek in all their corners, we shall find nothing more beautiful than Christ, who bled and died for us on the cross of Golgotha. There He put off His divine and heavenly beauty and is completely covered with deepest disgrace, with cross and death. When a contrite heart intently regards Jesus on the cross, it finds more pleasure in Him there than on Mount Tabor; the heart would rather build a tabernacle on Golgotha than on Mount Tabor, because it can never see enough of His beauty as He hangs upon the tree. Nowhere in this life is the heart so well satisfied as at the cross; for there alone it finds comfort, salvation, power and life. There it finds all. His death and dishonor have forced open the gates of death, that otherwise through all eternity would have held us captive. He has led us forth and lifted us from death's dungeon; He has placed us "in the gates of the daughter of Zion," the new Jerusalem. We can never sufficiently praise Him for His benefits; He has redeemed us, justified, sanctified and glorified us. Eternities are scarcely long enough for the enjoyment of His mercies, to say nothing of telling them. From eternity to eternity we shall have new material for His praise, and of His glory there shall be no end.

Let every kingdom, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all.

O that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall;
We'll join the everlasting song
And crown Him Lord of all.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Ps. 106: 2. That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehova, art the most high over all the earth. Ps. 83: 18.

Unutterable are God's acts to the world and to His children. He who considers God's works by the light of the Holy Spirit, has delight in them; his heart rejoices and is blessed. Wherever we turn, we see Him; we see His hand, which produces all things: we must admire and worship. All His works are pure effects of His unspeakable love to man. But among all God's works there is none that appears to us more beautiful and glorious than our redemption; His love to sinners; His open bosom; His arms stretching forth day and night to a rebellious people; this faithfulness, long-suffering, patience and kindness with which He receives sinners; raises up the fallen; goes after the lost; carries the weak, and strengthens the faint. Who can describe all the beauty to be found in Christ? Experience it, O heart! Place yourself beneath the cross of Christ and look your fill at His love and beauty. Then surely He will receive praise and adoration from you also for all that you have seen and heard, enjoyed or anticipated. May Jesus forever be your all in all; the highest, the best, the most beautiful, and the dearest in the whole world.

Fair are the meadows,
Fairer the woodlands,
Robed in flowers of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer;
He makes our sorrowing spirit sing.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Ps. 34: 8. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. Ps. 103: 8. Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works. Ps. 86: 8.

O God of goodness! Thou who hath tasted so "good" to the pious fathers in the tabernacle made with hands and destined to be broken down, how good Thou wilt taste to them who serve Thee in Thy new sanctuary, in spirit and in truth; who serve Thee in the temple not made with stones, but which Thou hast erected in our hearts by electing us as Thine eternal abode, by no longer revealing Thy glory in a cloud, but, without cover, in every soul consecrated to Thee in faith and love! It is Thy goodness alone that draweth us to Thee and fixeth our souls on Thee. Otherwise we would lack courage. How would sinners such as we dare to draw near to Thee, near to the holiness and glory of God, if Thy goodness, as a magnet, did not draw us so invitingly unto itself? Everything in us would forbid us to come to Thee: our corrupt and sinful nature would frighten us from so doing. But Thy love and goodness overcometh all and causeth us to forget whom we are; employeth our thoughts with Thee only, and filleth our hearts and minds so completely, that we can no longer remain away; we are too much blessed in praising and loving Thee to resist Thy drawing love or to wound that love which can not be happy without us.

Still let Thy love point out my way;
How wondrous things Thy love hath wrought!
Still lead me, lest I go astray;
Direct my work, inspire my thought;
And if I fall, soon may I hear
Thy voice, and know that love is near.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Thou art my Son; this day (from eternity) have I begotten thee. Ps. 2: 7. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way. Ps. 2: 12. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. John 3: 35. But unto the Son God saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. — — — He upholdeth all things by the word of his power. Heb. 1: 8—10; 1: 3.

A Christian can not think nor believe too highly of Christ. God and Christ must to him be names that mean the same. What we read of God in the Bible, what we see of Him in nature, what we anticipate of Him, and what we need from Him in our heart: it all concerns the Son as well as the Father. They are one, as Christ Himself has said (John 10: 30). Never think, speak or believe otherwise of Christ than of the Father. Do not separate them. They are forever inseparable. Worship the Son, otherwise you do not worship the Father; for the Father will be worshipped in the Son and with the Son only. If you think of Jesus without thinking of the Father, or if you separate the Divinity from the Son, then you have made Divinity unapproachable to you—then you have no God (2 John v. 9). Christ has laid the foundation of heaven and earth, and He upholds them by His omnipotence. "Kiss the Son;" that is, honor Him, worship Him as your God and Lord. Love Him as your Savior and Rescuer, lest He as the Judge become angry with you, and you fall into His hands when He comes to judge the world with fire.

To the great One in Three
Eternal praises be,
Hence evermore!
His sovereign majesty
May we in glory see,
And to eternity
Love and adore.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's. 1 Cor. 3: 22. 23. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Rom. 8: 32. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Pet. 1: 4.

Beloved, how rich we may be in Christ upon the slight condition that we flee from that which will soon leave us anyway, namely, "the corruption" of the world.

All things; all that God is and has; all that heaven and eternity contain, are yours. You shall possess and enjoy it all if you sever your heart completely from the world and deny its sensual pleasures. For both worlds, heaven and earth, God's kingdom and the kingdom of this world, Christ and Belial, cannot remain side by side in your heart. If you desire to have all that God offers you in Christ, you must let go of all that the flesh, the world, and Satan offer you; they only *offer*; they give not what they offer, but they rob you of all before you have really grasped the offer—before you have enjoyed it. But God makes you through Christ a partaker of His nature, His righteousness and holiness, salvation and glory. You shall be holy and blessed as He is holy and blessed; you shall reign with Him and rejoice with Him forever in heaven. Who can comprehend such love? Why does not all else become loathsome to us but God and His Word, in which such promises are held out to us? Who can believe in these promises and yet continue to conform himself to the world? continue to desire the enjoyment of the world? continue to cling with the heart to aught else but the greatest of all, which is his when he grasps it in faith and holds it fast with all his heart? Though no other word in the Scriptures could awaken us and convert us, this one word "all" ought to win us over to Christ and forever drive the world, the flesh and the devil out of our hearts and thougths.

In the faith, O make me steadfast;
Let not Satan, death or shame
Of my confidence deprive me;
Lord, my refuge is Thy name.
When the flesh inclines to ill,
Let Thy Word prove stronger still.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. My soul fainteth for thy salvation. Ps. 119: 20. 21. Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble. Ps. 10: 17. We shall be like him; for we

shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure. 1 John 3: 2. 3.

It is impossible and unnatural for him who has tasted the goodness of the Lord, not to long for Him. When we know Jesus, should we long less for Him than did the soul of David breaking "for the longing" after Jehovah? Should the God of the New Testament, the bleeding, suffering and dying Savior, the good Shepherd, the Lamb, the Bridegroom, draw us less powerfully to Himself? Should not He rather kindle more ardent longing than did the thundering and lightening Jehovah of the old covenant? Should our love be colder to Him who has loved us unto death and whom we see dying upon the cross because of love? No: he who knows Jesus, burns with longing for Him day and night; he comforts himself with His will only and with the lively hope of seeing Him some day, and all the more glorious, the longer he must remain a pilgrim on earth. Beloved, how is it with your soul? Do you long for Jesus? Or would you be terror-stricken if you should see Him to-day? Let him who would have a joyful and lively hope of seeing Jesus, purify himself from all defilement of the world, from selfishness and vanity; let him purify himself even as God is pure. For the unclean shall not see God and Christ.

Thee will I love, my strength, my tower,
Thee will I love, my joy, my crown;
Thee will I love with all my power,
In all my work and Thee alone;
Thee will I love, till the pure fire
Fill my soul with chaste desire.

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. Is. 38: 17. **I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.** Is. 44: 22.

Let him who fears on account of his sins, regard his fear as a pledge that the Lord and His salvation are near; for the Lord is in such fear. He calls it forth, and He sustains it. Otherwise we should never fear on account of our sins in this world. Now He who makes you fear will also make you happy and blessed; for, as a wise and good physician, He wounds only that He may heal; He cuts into the wound that He may make you healthy and clean. He first sends disconsolateness or the want of comfort to your heart, that He may afterward send consolation, that He may find an entrance. But when the disconsolate and sorrowful soul implores Him, trusts in Him, He comes with consolation and shows His kind countenance; before Him and the words of His grace, with which He appears to the tearful eyes of the soul, vanish sins, accusation of conscience, terror of judgment, as the mist before the sun, and as clouds chased by the wind. Then the sky of the soul becomes clear; the sun smiles into your heart; He lays songs of praise upon your lips, so that you, no less than others whom He has saved, give Him the testimony, "He has in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption." Only remain in this grace and keep it. As much as it causes you joy, so faithfully use it and keep it; otherwise the sin which God has put behind His back, will come again and take possession of you with sevenfold power.

Though great our sins and sore our woes,
His grace much more aboundeth;
His helping love no limit knows,
Our utmost need it soundeth.
Our kind and faithul Shepherd, He,
Who shall at last set Israel free
From all their sin and sorrow.

MONDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Rev. 13: 10. Be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb. 6: 12. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work. Jas. 1: 3. 4.

When gold is cast into the fire, it can be seen whether it is gold or only slag, false splendor and glitter. You say that you have faith? Has your faith been tried? Has it been in the fire of tribulation? Have you "patience" also? Faith without patience is not a faith pleasing to God. Therefore St. Paul says, "All men have not faith" (2 Thes. 3: 2). Why? Patience is something seldom found. You can easily memorize the language of faith and repeat the words fluently; but the patience of true faith often lags behind on the mountain-side, when the trail is uneven and crooked. Some give evidence of patience in the beginning; but they do not endure; their patience does not bring forth any perfect work; it stands on such weak legs because it does not rely on the Man of Patience, who alone is able to sustain it. Such a person has built his house on sand and babbling words from which no power ever enters the heart. When the floods and the storms of temptation come, the straw-shed of weak faith tumbles down, or the fire of tribulation consumes it. Such a result does not require persecutions, fire and sword, in which trials the first Christians held their ground so gloriously. All that is necessary, is that illness or other bodily need befall; no patience is found in such a chattering Christian even though you search for it with a lantern. If a person, when death is near, be terror-stricken, he endures that in a way; but if the danger of death be past, there is no more faith and patience. Let him who feels that he is in such a condition, pray that his faith be increased; let him whose faith has not yet been tried, take heed, lest he fall.

When we seek relief
From a long felt grief;
When temptations come alluring,
Make us patient and enduring;
Show us that bright shore
Where we weep no more.

TUESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. Ps. 73: 25. I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ. Phil. 3: 8.

Asaph and St. Paul, and all who truly know Jesus, find nothing more desirable than Him. Even here on earth, walking by faith, they find more in Jesus than heaven and earth can offer. What then, will they not find in Him, and how will they not enjoy Him in heaven where they shall see Him as He is, and be like Him! But these heroes of faith have few followers nowadays. Most people speak in the opposite manner and say, as they think: "If I only have the world and its treasures; if I only can satisfy the desires of the flesh; if I only possess honor and fame among men, what do I care about Jesus?" Others, who do not go quite as far, think: "If only I can get to heaven some day, what do I care about the knowledge of Christ Jesus?" Oh, ye children of men, ye desire too little; ye may possess infinitely more than all the possessions of earth and humanity, yea, of heaven itself. Jesus Christ will bestow Himself upon you: in Him ye have more than a thousand worlds, more than the heaven of heavens. To know Him, and in Him the Father, is life eternal. "The knowledge of Christ Jesus" is more than all earthly riches; more blessed than all the pleasures of the flesh; more glorious than all honor and fame among men. Without Him, and beside Him, everything is nothing; heaven itself is no longer heaven, but a desert and a hell. Without Him, and beside Him, everything is loathsome and less than nothing; as Paul says that all else is "loss" and "dung." Therefore, be not blinded by earthly glitter, by vainglory. He that is in possession of Christ, is in possession of everything; he possesses infinitely more than all wealth without Christ. He who does not possess Christ, has Him against himself; he who has Christ for an opponent,

has never tasted real joy. Nor is this all: if you do not recognize Christ Jesus as your Lord; if you do not possess Him as your Redeemer and Savior; if He is not your all in all, He is your Judge; and since you have rejected Him and given other things the preference, He will reject you. What can the world with all its pleasures and glory help you? What can money and property, fame and honor among men profit you before His judgment seat? What can deliver you from "the wrath to come?" The fact remains: There is not only no higher gain than Christ, but all gain is loss and dung if we do not possess Christ. He that possesses Him has all things in abundance.

My hope, my all, my Savior Thou!
To Thee, O Lord, my soul I bow.
I seek the bliss Thy wounds impart,
I long to find Thee in my heart.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not: and in the night season, and am not silent. Ps. 22: 2. Unto thee will I cry, O Lord my rock; be not silent to me: lest, if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit. Ps. 28: 1. My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O Lord, how long? Ps. 6: 3. How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? forever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? Ps. 13: 1.

Be not offended with your gracious God when He deals with you as with His dearest friends. He often permits them to cry long without giving a sign that He hears them, so that they are near to despair and believe that they are, as it were, already in hell. Do not take offence when you receive no answer to all your prayers; when you must cry, "Oh, how long?" when it seems to you that the Lord has forgotten you and that He does not heed your supplications. All of God's beloved have experienced the same before you. No answer to your ardent prayers is, nevertheless, an answer, and it reads thus: Wait; be silent; suffer; strive and hope! At last you shall be able to confess with David, who complained even more than you: "But I have

trusted in Thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Thy salvation. I will sing unto the Lord, because He hath dealt bountifully with me" (Ps. 13: 5. 6). Profound as is the silence of the Lord now causing you sorrow, so distinctly and comfortingly will He speak to you. As full as your heart now is of complaining, so full will your mouth be of gladness and rejoicing when the Lord sees fit to answer you

Who fully yields to God's direction,
And puts in Him his confidence,
Has found deliverance and protection,
A rock of refuge and defence.
Who trusts in heaven unshaken stands;
He builds not on the shifting sands.

THURSDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. Ps. 34: 4. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. Ps. 72: 12.

Ask the ancients, ask all who have ever been in tribulation and temptation, in need and anxiety, if the Lord has not delivered, comforted and blessed them when they put all their trust in Him, and when they cried perseveringly unto Him. What does David, the tried and afflicted soldier of God, say? Ask him. He answers through His psalms and assures you that the Lord is faithful, merciful and gracious; that He hears and grants the prayers and supplications of the poor and forsaken, the tempted and the afflicted, no matter what their affliction may be; that He delivers and strengthens them; in short, that one can not get into any situation, nor fall into any depth, from which the hand of the Lord, the mighty Benefactor, can not and will not rescue him. Only the prince of darkness or short-sighted reason cause mists to appear before your eyes; your stormy heart raises clouds of dust that blind your sight so that you can not see the saving hand which the Lord stretches out to you. Your fears and half-hearted will hinder you from grasping His hand and holding

it fast. But if you do grasp it without heeding Satan, your mistrusting thoughts and all the fancies and objections of unbelief, O how soon and gloriously you will be delivered and how joyously you then shall praise the Lord!

Think not, since thou some cross art bearing,
That God hath turned from thee away;
Or that for those alone He's caring,
Whom fortune favors every day.
Time, passing by on restless wings,
To each and all great changes brings.

FRIDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment. Ps. 104: 2. The light dwelleth with him. Dan. 2: 22. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts. 2 Cor. 4: 6 That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. John 1: 9.

Only the Creator of light, from whom all light proceeds, because He is Himself pure light, can shed light in our soul, when it is dark within us. Spiritually we are the same as the world would be without the sun, without light. If the Sun of righteousness, Christ, does not rise in us, there is only darkness, death and coldness, unfruitfulnes and dislike of all good, in us. As the physical sun must rise and give light each day if day shall not be buried in eternal night, so Christ, the Morning Star, must each morning anew appear and give us light throughout the day; and as there no longer must be night in the Christian—for we are the children of the day, the night is past—He must by night and by day be our Sun, our Light, and our Life. Ask yourself every morning, if the Morning Star has shined forth in your heart. Ask yourself every night if also the night is light, if the Lord is your Light, or if you walk in the shadow of death as the children of the night.

O Christ, our true and only light,
Illumine those who sit in night;
Let those afar now hear Thy voice,
And in Thy fold with us rejoice.

Fill with the radiance of Thy grace
The souls now lost in error's maze;
And all, O Lord, whose secret minds,
Some dark delusion hurts and blinds.

SATURDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. John 15: 5. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. — — — What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? Is. 5: 1-4.

O most holy mystery of the soul's closest union with Christ, its head! Yes, it is certainly true: What more couldst Thou have done to Thy vineyard? Thou in us, and we in Thee. Couldst Thou come nearer to us? Shouldst Thou not expect divine fruits on the branches, when the vine is divine? Must Thou not become angry when Thou, notwithstanding all that Thou hast done and doest in us, yet canst not find grapes, no perfect fruits, but only wild grapes in us? Beloved, consider what manner of branches you are. Where are the grapes? (Gal. 5: 22—24). If you do not find these, you undoubtedly lack the right connection, the right communion with the vine: it is impossible that you are in Christ. But if you find wild grapes (Gal. 5: 19—21), or at least some of them in you, it is clear that you have never seen or known the vine; for then you walk in the flesh and not in the Spirit; in Belial, not in Christ. Oh, let us make use of His glorious grace. Is it not pure grace that Jesus is our vine; unites us, as branches, to Himself, and bears fruit in us and with us which we may enjoy? If He, without being in us, or without permitting us to be in Him, demand fruits of us, then we were undoubtedly lost. But now we have no excuse if we do not remain in Him.

In Him ever would I be abiding,
In Him meat and drink and peace I have;
In His gracious arms my place of hiding;
Soul and body both His love will save.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. Ps. 32: 8. I taught Ephraim also to go (as a little child). Hos. 11: 3. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me. For thy name's sake lead me and guide me. Ps. 27: 11; 25: 5; 31: 3.

Who, without a guide, could find the way to the hidden and unknown Fatherland, which he had never seen? Our own guidance would lead us astray. The guidance of men is not altogether to be rejected, but we can not fully depend upon it. A wise, pious and experienced servant of God can show you the way and guide you, but if you remain with him, you do not come to the Lord; and if, notwithstanding all the counsel and guidance of good men, you do not have the Lord Himself as your leader and inward guide; if you do not hold Him fast and conscientiously follow Him, you cannot reach the goal. Besides, the Lord is so good and gracious that He offers to you His guidance, and gives you the glorious promises (Ps. 32: 8; Hos. 11: 3), that He will teach you in the way which you shall go; will guide you with His eye; will take you by the hand and lead you so that you may walk securely. Will you not grasp this loving and steady hand? Will you not look into those eyes that so kindly would lead you? But how am I to understand the look of His eyes? you ask. He looks at you from within, not from without. If your eye be clear, honest and without guile; if it see not double—if you willingly enter into your heart and learn to consult with God in prayer—you shall learn to understand His answer and His guidance; you shall feel His hand and experience that which He promises. His eye shall guide as effectively, and His hand shall lay hold of you as powerfully and lead you as a father leads, lifts and carries his child, without ever losing sight of it or letting it slip out of his hand. But this special guidance demands also a special faithfulness as to your inner life; a watchful eye, a heart collected and ever turned to the Lord. Otherwise you overlook

the guidance of His eyes and perceive not His leading hand.

Meekly may my soul receive
All Thy Spirit hath revealed.
Thou hast spoken;—I believe,
Though the prophecy were sealed.

MONDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living. Rom. 14: 9. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 2 Cor. 4: 10.

May the sufferings, death and merits of Christ not only be in your mouth, but also in your heart. Let the crucified and risen One be your Lord. Do not only say "Lord, Lord" to Him, but acknowledge Him as your Lord; follow Him; cling to Him with your whole heart; let Him rule and govern your heart, mind and conduct. He died for you that He might live for you. He sacrificed His life for you that you might sacrifice your life for Him and no more live unto yourself, but unto Him. This is called "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus." It must be seen in conduct that Christ died and rose again for you. It must be apparent that you no longer belong to yourself, but that you belong to Jesus. That in no respect do you follow yourself and your own will, but only Jesus. Then His death and merits are revealed in you; and you glorify your Savior in Spirit and in body.

Saints rejoicing evermore,
In the Lord Jehovah trust:
Him in all His ways adore,
Wise, and wonderful, and just.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

In my distress I called upon the Lord. Ps. 18: 6. Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again. I called upon the Lord in distress; the Lord answered me. Ps. 71: 20; 118: 5.

Whatever causes you anxiety and trouble, is sent you by the Lord for no other reason than to teach you to pray and believe—to call upon Him. Let every anxiety or distress be God's messenger to you who tells you: "It is now high time that you turn with all your heart to your Savior." If your sins cause you anxiety, let this anxiety be to you a sealed letter from heaven. Break the seal and open the letter. You can open it by constant prayer, and you shall read therein, written with God's own finger, the words in Isaiah 1: 18, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." If it be a great affliction, it is a memorandum from the Lord saying to you, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Ps. 50: 15). The Lord does not cause any human soul anxiety without reason; but since men are not usually drawn to God by love, He uses the rod. He uses force, so to speak, to compel them to seek His face and receive His help. If the saints of the Old Testament could comfort themselves in their anxiety; if they could find the face of God, how much more ought not we do it, to whom the bosom of God is so wide open in Christ, who came to this world in behalf of those who were in distress and anxiety. He who does not cast out any one who comes to Him, Himself cries out to all and invites them kindly, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mat. 11: 28).

In suffering, be Thy love my peace,
In weakness be Thy love my power;
And when the storms of life shall cease,
Jesus, in that important hour,
In death as life be Thou my guide,
And save me, Who for me hast died!

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. Ps. 145: 18. **Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.** Lam. 3: 57.

What can cheer the heart of him who is not gladdened by the assurance that God, Christ Himself, is near when we call upon Him in truth? What can be more discouraging to man since Adam was cast away from before the face of God and driven out of Eden; since the cherub with the flaming sword was placed before the entrance to Paradise; since by a cloud Jesus was hid from the eyes of the disciples and of men, than this withdrawal of the visible God from the earth? Our only consolation is and must therefore be, that God in Christ nevertheless is near, may be found near, may be perceived in the Spirit, when we really desire Him and seek Him continually; when we disengage body, soul and spirit from everything else; and when through faith and love we transport ourselves into His invisible presence. And when we seek His face He will not frighten us nor appear terrible to us, but He will say, "Fear not, my child! Keep close to me and I will keep close to thee." Oh, how kindly He receives the children of men who turn back to Him! How His heart yearns for us! Let him who desires real joy, who would taste the greatest bliss that man can have on earth, seek the nearness of God and Christ. Greater bliss can not be conceived of on earth than to have Jesus near.

From all eternity, with love
Unchangeable, Thou hast me viewed.
Ere knew this breathing heart to move,
Thy tender mercies me pursued;
Ever with me may they abide,
And close me in on every side.



THURSDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us — — I in them, and thou in me, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them. John 17: 20—26. Christ in you, the hope of glory. Col. 1: 27.

Christ has founded an association and a communion the like of which is not to be found in heaven or on earth. The Father in Him, He in the Father and in us. We in Him, and in the Father? What does this mean? Who can explain it? Who can comprehend it? We are not supposed to comprehend it, because we cannot. But we should be in Christ and remain in Him, we are to receive, enjoy and hold fast all that He would be to us and in us. And what is that? All that He has and is, is ours, because He is wholly and completely ours. As no one can ascend up to heaven and measure its height, so no one can fathom the depth of this mystery. Do not trouble yourself about that. Only cast yourself therein with all that you have and are, and live there. But is this for all? Is it for you also? Yes, if you believe; for then He has acquired it for you by His intercessory prayers; then you are a member of this mystical union with Christ and the Father as well as Peter and John. For He prayed expressly for all who, through the word of the apostles, should believe in Him. If you believe, then you may have this union. If still you have nothing of it, if your heart be empty and without Christ, if you live without His blessed communion, then you do not believe; you have only the word "faith" in your mouth, but not the power of faith in your heart. He who believes, possess all that Christ has promised to faith, if not in complete fulness, yet at least in its beginnings. If we believe Him, we possess Him; if we do not possess Him, we do not believe Him.

Thou my faith increase and quicken,
Let me keep Thy gift divine,
Howsoe'er temptations thicken,
May Thy word still o'er me shine;
As my guiding star through life,
As my comfort in my strife.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

My beloved is mine and I am his. Cant. 2: 16; 6: 3. **For none of us liveth to himself. — — — Whether we live, we live unto the Lord.** Rom. 14: 7. 8.

If Christ be in us, and if He be ours, it follows that we must be in Him. There can be no fellowship where the members do not divide all things with each other. Selfishness excludes fellowship. He who desires to have Christ whole and undivided, to be partaker of His merits, grace and indwelling, His coming glory, must belong to the Savior whole and undivided; he must surrender wholly and completely to Christ, and continue to be His without any reservation in life and death, in joy and sorrow, without ever drawing back. There are many who glory in Christ and His merits. There are many who receive Jesus, but they do not surrender themselves to Christ; they keep themselves back for themselves. Christ must not divide Himself; He must surrender Himself completely to them; but they divide themselves, and that most shamefully. They give Christ words, lip service and outward homage, while their heart clings to the world, sin, and themselves. These are Christians in name only. They delude themselves into a belief concerning the merits of Christ, But they do not have Christ Himself. They never become partakers of Christ so long as they do not surrender to Him.

Savior, teach me day by day,
Love's sweet lesson to obey;
Sweeter lesson cannot be,
Loving Him who first loved me.

With a childlike heart of love,
At Thy bidding may I move,
Prompt to serve and follow Thee,
Loving Him who first loved me.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me. Mic. 7: 8. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Ps. 97: 11.

Here on earth the conflict between light and darkness will continue in us as well as about us. No matter how enlightened you may be, you must nevertheless walk through dark nights and valleys of deep shadow. It will often be so dark to your spiritual eye that the sun and moon and stars seem to be extinguished on the firmament of your soul, as if they were never again to shine, as if you were buried in eternal darkness never again to see a ray of light. Your sun, the presence of the Lord, will hide itself as if He had never shone for you. You are troubled by the doubt as to whether it has not been a dream and disappointment, if the day has really ever existed in your soul. "There is no light; you have deluded yourself," are the words of the tempter. But you must wait and believe in the invisible light as if you saw it. There will soon be a change. Night will again be swallowed up by day. The sun cannot remain down: when his hour comes, he must again rise and run his course. If you will not create a light in the darkness, if you rather depend on the Lord and wait for Him, He will be your light in the darkness; He will guide you with a hidden hand, and let the light and the gladness anew arise in His good time. If, therefore, afflictions darken the horizon of your soul, and you do not see the sun, if not even a star shines for you, then believe nevertheless, and do not doubt that sun and stars are and remain in the heavens, even though they are hidden behind the clouds. They are in the same place whether you see them or not. A good sailor knows where he is, where the sun and the stars are, even though it storms and the sky be overcast with clouds. He goes according to them just as well as if he saw them in clear weather. Christ is the same even when you do not see Him. The hand of the Lord is over you even though it be hidden from your view.

And thus my trust is in the Lord,
And not in mine own merit;
I rest upon His faithful word
To them of contrite spirit.
That He is merciful and just,—
Here is my comfort and my trust,
His help I wait in patience.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

My soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me. Ps. 57: 1. 2.

He who on reading this psalm through feels himself in the same or in a similar situation as that of David when he, being pursued by Saul, fled to the cave (1 Sam. 22: 1); he who is bowed down by some affliction or tribulation, should follow the same course as David followed: he should hasten to place himself under the shadow of the wings of the Lord, where he is safe and secure, until the calamity be overpast. Where do we find the shadow of His wings? Where does He spread them over us? Where does He cover us with His protection? Wherever we seek Him; wherever we call upon Him; wherever our heart longs for Him. In the fiery furnace of affliction He is our cooling and refreshment if we seek Him where He visits us with tribulations, namely, in our heart. There He will most assuredly let Himself be found. He has said, "I am with thee in distress." He is never nearer, and never easier to be found, than when He visits us with tribulation. If we fall into the hands of men, and they stab, smite and tear us asunder with spears and arrows, with the keen sword of their tongue, no other help is left but to look up to Him who sends afflictions. He cannot be far away. Men are but instruments in His hand. The hand must be just as near as the instrument, since the hand holds and guides it. He who permits the tribulation to come, will also know how to end it. Meanwhile, His "shadow" is sufficient for you.

In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright,
But can never cease to love thee;
Thou art precious in His sight:
God is with thee,
God, thine everlasting Light.

MONDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. John 14: 18. I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father. John 14: 28.

What sacred and glorious promises our Savior has left us! How tenderly, kindly and comfortingly He speaks to His children and prepares them for the withdrawal of His visible presence! Blessed is the believing heart that takes the Savior at His word, and which comforts itself with His invisible presence, and trusts in that as if it saw Him. Should He withdraw Himself from such a child-like mind and not keep His precious word, who always rejoiced when He saw faith in His Word, if only as a mustard seed? Shall He rejoice only when men in faith receive of Him physical help, healing from their bodily weaknesses and diseases? Shall it not much sooner cause Him heavenly joy when we not only lay hold of His gifts, but of Himself in faith, when we take Him at the word, "I will come unto you; I will not leave you comfortless;" when we consider this promise not as empty words, but as the truth, and we hold it fast as such? He who holds fast the word of Christ, holds Christ fast.

Lord, Thy word abideth,
And our footsteps guideth;
Who its truth believeth
Light and joy receiveth.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. — — — I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14: 2. 3.

What a word of consolation for all the suffering and comfortless ones on earth! He who appropriates Thee, Jesus, in faith, may rejoice in afflictions and be of good cheer in the most cheerless situation, content in the midst of discontent. The Son of God alone, the Son of eternal Love, can bring comfort. Such promises of eternal life—who else can give them, who else can fulfill them? Therefore Thou oughtest to own our whole heart, Thou who preparest a place for us, Thou builder of the heavenly mansions, Thou messenger from the Father, who Thyself wilt come for us, and lead us into His crystal and diamond palaces. When the poor, weak heart thinks to itself, "Where Thou art, there shall I be also; as Thou art exalted and glorious, so shall I also be,"—when the heart grasps and understands this word in its full meaning, in its height and depth, it is ready to die with the glory and blessedness of this hope. Why, then, wilt Thou have us with Thee, so near toThee, and eternally with Thee? What is there in us pleasing to Thee? What joy do we cause Thee? Are we able to increase Thy blessedness? Yes, we are to be an object of Thy love which it may love to its full satisfaction; for no creature is so much in need of Thy love and favor as we poor, weak sinners. Who can behold the heavens without thinking of Thee and Thy heavenly promise, without rejoicing rapturously in this promise? Heaven, house of the Father, home of the disciples of Jesus, how beautiful art thou not when thou art explained to us by the words of Jesus! When we think of the "mansions" His hands have prepared for us, who can be satisfied to look at them even from without! How must it not be within!

Jerusalem, thou city fair and high,
Would God I were in thee!
My longing heart fain, fain to thee would fly!
It will not stay with me:
Far over vale and mountain,
Far over field and plain,
It hastes to seek its Fountain
And quit this world of pain.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high-priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb. 10: 19-22.

Yes, he that is sprinkled with the blood of Christ can enter even here with "boldness," with glad and child-like confidence, "into the holiest," into the communion of God in the Spirit, and once, beyond, into heaven. To that end "the new and living way," which Christ has consecrated by His sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension, lies open for us. He has prepared the way. As our Predecessor He has entered in before us; and not only has He left the way and the gate open for us, but He will Himself be our way and our gate; He will draw us with the strong, three-stranded cord of love, faith, and hope. When we hold fast and do not let this cord slip out of our hands, He will unfailingly draw us after Himself in the new and living way. How beautifully does not St. Paul express it, calling the way *"living."* Why does he call it thus? Is not Christ Himself the way? (John 14: 6). Is not He living? Is He not the way, and the truth, and the life? Is it not also "new?" Where has there, before or after Him, been found a way to heaven, a way to the Father? Friend, leave the old ways of the world and of sin, and choose this "new and living way." How good it is to walk on a new way, and how easy to walk on a "living" way, which is called "living" because it revives and strengthens the pilgrims; helps them up when they fall; gives them new strength when they are weary; directs them and leads them back when they err or go astray; a way which is all to all men who walk upon it. What a way! Where is such a way as this? And yet so few walk upon it.

Jesus, my Truth, my Way,
My sure unerring Light,
On Thee my feeble soul I stay,
Which Thou wilt lead aright.

ASCENSION DAY.

God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Ps. 47: 5. When he ascended up on high, he lead captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. Eph. 4: 8—10. He has made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. 2: 6.

The ascension of Jesus filled heaven and earth with great joy. It is the triumph over all enemies; for He is, as the Head of mankind, ascended up far above all heavens. And where the Head is, there must also the members be. He will draw them all to Himself. The Head has conquered and broken through; then it is impossible that the members should be left behind. He has taken captive the prison in which sin and the devil held us captive (Ps. 68: 18), that is to say, all that placed man in chains, checked his course and held him back, has been conquered by Jesus and taken captive by His sufferings and death. He has taken him captive who held us all in captivity. He has taken the keeper of the prison captive and has thrown him into prison. And if the warden of the prison is in prison, then the captives are free. He has, however, not only freed us from chains and from prison, not only procured for us the forgiveness of sins, but He has also distributed gifts, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, that we might not again be taken captive, but conquer the world, Satan, and the evil desires that are ever ready to recapture us. He has procured and bestowed power and wings that we might soar up to Him and be transported from the visible kingdom to His invisible kingdom, to heaven.

Draw us to Thee, Lord Jesus,
And we will hasten on;
For strong desire doth seize us
To go where Thou art gone.

Draw us to Thee; nor leave us
Till all our faith is trod,
Then in Thy arms receive us,
And bear us home to God.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

And he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. Luke 24: 50. 51.

For the last time the Son of man walked on earth with His disciples, and took the road leading to Bethany which was so dear to Him. There, it was destined, He should leave this earth, that He might, although invisible, be very close to them. For the last time He lifted His holy, pierced hands over the disciples to bless them. Fortunate disciples, who saw with your own eyes these hands lifted in benediction over you. What a benediction it must have been! But did it concern you only and not also the believers through the coming centuries, as that other prayer in John 17: 20? Yes, it surely concerned them also. Therefore I, too, place myself without hesitation among Thy disciples, O Lord, as if I saw Thee lift Thy pierced hands over me; as if Thou didst even to-day stand before my eyes and pour out Thy heavenly blessings upon me and all who love Thy name and trust in Thee and in Thy grace. I rest assured that Thou dost bless whenever a soul has a living faith in Thee just as well now as on the occasion when Thy disciples saw Thee; for to bless is Thy pleasure, and Thou art sent us by the Father in order to bless us (Acts 3: 26). With a benediction didst Thou ascend from the earth up to heaven, and with a benediction Thou lookest ever down as often as we trustfully, prayerfully, and longingly look up to Thee.

Up to heaven ascending
Our dear Lord has gone;
Yet His little children
Leaves He not alone.

Spirit of adoption!
Make us overflow
With Thy sevenfold blessing,
And in grace to grow.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Christ entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. 9: 24. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. Heb. 7: 25. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 John 2: 1.

What joy and comfort! Jesus has not left us; He has not withdrawn from us by going to the Father; but for us, for our sake, did He go away, for our sake He is there. We have an accuser there, an enemy, who day and night accuses us, puts the darkest coloring on all our faults and transgressions, and challenges the justice and vengenace of God to come upon us. He also slanders us (Rev. 12: 10; Job 1: 9; Zech. 3: 1). Therefore, how fortunate is it not that we have a friend, an attorney, an advocate above, and One before whom all our enemies and accusers must keep silence, because He has conquered them all! Hence He says, "It is expedient for you that I go away." Yes, it certainly is expedient, O Lord, that we have Thee above and yet here at the same time. When we draw nigh unto God in prayer it shall never fail, that there already stands One in the presence of God in our stead who always lives, never sleeps, never slumbers, and who always intercedes for us. What a great and beautiful thought! May it never leave me! The Lord lifts His pierced hands before the throne of the Father also for me. The Lord is there for my sake, that He may appear before the Father in my stead.

He died to bear the guilt of men,
That sin might be forgiven:
He lives to bless them and defend,
And plead their cause in heaven.

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

While they beheld he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. Acts 1: 9. He was parted from them, and carried up to heaven. And they worshipped him. Luke 24: 51. 52.

The disciples saw Christ bleeding upon the cross, bowing His head in death, buried, and the sepulchre sealed. Then, undoubtedly, was also their faith completely buried. How hard would it not have been for them to believe, even though an angel had told them, "This Jesus, who lies in the sepulchre, and in whom there is no trace of life, shall ascend in the cloud, up to heaven before your eyes." But behold, it came to pass, nevertheless, however hard it was to believe. As small and weak as the faith of the disciples was at that time, so great became their joy and adoration later, when they saw with their own eyes that which was so hard to believe. Thus it is with the promises of God. Thus it is with ourselves. We who now walk in the dust must believe that we shall once shine as the stars, that we shall see Him as He is and be like Him. No matter how incredible this may seem, it shall nevertheless come to pass. Whatsoever the Lord promises, that will He assuredly keep, and much more. It will all take place and far surpass our boldest expectations. Then we shall stand humbled, as the disciples, and yet rejoice because the Lord is greater, more faithful, and more true than our weak faith could conceive Him to be. How small Jesus was in the manger! How poor and lowly! And later, on the cross, how bruised, how despised, how rejected, how powerless, how abased! But shortly afterwards, on the day of ascension, how great, how glorious, how powerful, how highly exalted above all others! Thus the disciples worshipped. I believe that I would have worshipped too. But in the stable, on the cross, where all cursed and reviled Him—what would I have done then?

Jesus lives! to Him the throne
High o'er heaven and earth is given:
I shall go where He is gone,
Live and reign with Him in heaven.
God is pledged; weak doubtings, hence!
This shall be my confidence.

MONDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

Thou hast ascended on high — — — thou hast received gifts for men. Ps. 68: 18. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Eph. 1: 3.

He ascended on high to the Father to receive what He had earned by His sufferings and death, by His obedience unto the death of the cross; yet not only to let Himself be crowned with honor and glory, but more especially to receive the gifts of grace, benefits and blessings, which He had earned for the world, and to bestow them upon the redeemed. He did not enter into heaven there to rest from His sorrow and labor, much less to take vengeance upon the ungodly men who had reviled and crucified Him on earth, but to overwhelm them with grace and benefits, to save them and draw them unto Himself. However great and splendid the honor and glory which He enjoys on the throne of God, yet it is not too great for Him to look down upon us, who are poor and groveling in the dust. No, He remains in constant communication with His own on earth. He stretches out His hand, full of gracious gifts, from high heaven and fills us with blessings and happiness as often as we lift our hearts and hands to Him. He stretches His hands down to us in the depths to draw us out of the darkness of earth to His eternal kingdom of light. He cannot rest. He wants us all to be with Him, to possess and enjoy the gifts which He has earned for us, for this life as well as for the life to come. We are to have all that He Himself has. In such manner does the Father bless us through the Son.

Savior, draw away our heart
Now from pleasures base and hollow,
Let us there with Thee have part,
Here on earth Thy footsteps follow.
Fix our hearts beyond the skies,
Whither we ourselves would rise.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The Lord — — — sat on the right hand of God. Mark 16: 19. Who is he that condemneth? Christ — — is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Rom. 8: 34. We have such an high-priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens. Heb. 8: 1. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5: 31.

Stephen saw Jesus "on the right hand of God" (Acts 7: 55), and whoever will mount up in the Spirit to Him and call upon Him earnestly and in faith shall know "the saving strength of His right hand" (Ps. 20: 6); that His "right hand is full of righteousness" (Ps. 48: 10); that the power of His right hand can change all things; that He has a strong "hand" and that His "right hand" is "high" (Ps. 89: 13). What it means to sit "on the right hand of God," the Savior has Himself explained in saying, "Unto me is given all power in heaven and on earth." He reigns; He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Almighty; and yet He is our friend and brother, our advocate, our high-priest, our Savior, who concerns Himself about the least as if he were the greatest. As high-priest He bears all upon His heart, not only on the breastplate, as Aaron did the children of Israel, but graven in His heart and hands. With power and might just as well as with love and kindness He rules over all things and thinks of all who believe in Him and trust in Him. No human heart can comprehend what blessedness and grace are contained in the fact that Jesus is human as we are human; that He is our Brother, who is God over all, exalted to the right hand of the majesty in heaven; our Prince and Savior, who does not use His power and greatness to destroy, but to bestow penitence and forgiveness of sins upon those who seek Him in prayer.

Jesus Christ, my sure defence,
And my Savior, ever liveth;
Knowing this, my confidence
Rests upon the hope He giveth,
Though the nights of death be fraught
Still with many an anxious thought.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Col. 3: 1. 2.

He who believes that Christ also for his sake is ascended up to heaven and that He sits at the right hand of God; that there He is his advocate, intercedes for him, and thinks of him, must show his faith by a heavenly mind and conversation. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. If Christ at the right hand of God be your treasure and inheritance, then your heart will be more with Him above than here upon earth. But as long as you seek earthly things more than heavenly things, and have your heart more set upon corruptible things than upon things eternal; as long as you cling with your whole heart to glory and honor among men, and regard carnal pleasures as your heaven, you delude yourself, and your faith in Christ is a mere fancy. The living faith in Him who is exalted to the right hand of God does not permit us to cling to the low earth, but lifts us up to Him in whom we believe. If Christ in heaven be your head and Savior, you must as one of His members be with Him. If with your whole soul and body you are down here on earth, then you as a member are a long way from the Head. How can a separated member enjoy the beneficent influence of the Head? You can not believe in Him, nor cling to Him, without being near Him in spirit, without being with Him, without rising to Him. Yea, the heart of a true Christian is not at home here; it is with the Savior in heaven.

From that living Fountain drinking,
Walking always at His side,
Christ shall lead me without sinking
Through the river's rushing tide;
With the blest to sing forever;
I will leave my Jesus never!

THURSDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh. Ezek. 11: 19; 36: 26.

If there be any fault in man—and who has not his faults?—it lies in his heart. The heart of man, all the inventions of the thoughts of his heart, are "wicked from his youth up." It is susceptible to evil, and lightning-like gathers up base impressions; against God and divine things the heart is hard as a rock and devoid of feeling. Who can soften this hardness, and crush this stone? The Lord has promised to do it; He is faithful; He will also do it. Only take your heart to Him often; only expose yourself to the warming and softening rays of His love, in heartfelt, earnest prayer, and your heart will be changed. All things are changed by coming close to the fire; they melt, are softened, or hardened, cleansed, beautified, or consumed. The Lord is a consuming fire; if you allow yourself to come into contact with Him, as the goldsmith holds the gold in the fire, then that which is hard must become soft; that which is impure must become pure; and that which is evil must be consumed. No man can excuse himself with his weak or hard heart, which he has by nature, since the Lord so clearly and positively has promised to give us "a new heart" and a new "spirit," to take away our "stony heart" and give us "a heart of flesh," a heart soft and susceptible to His impressions and influences. You can rest assured that He gives it to you, if you allow Him to give it to you, and that He takes away all that must be taken away, if you allow Him to do so.

Create my nature pure within,
And form my soul averse to sin:
Let Thy good Spirit ne'er depart,
Nor hide Thy presence from my heart.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh. Gen. 6: 3. Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness. Ps. 143: 10. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Rom. 8: 9.

The Spirit of God strives with all men, even the most ungodly. He strove with the first men, whom by inward and outward chastisement He sought to bring into the right way until they stubbornly resisted Him and would no longer lend Him ear. But then He annihilated all of them by the deluge. When a man no longer gives ear to the Spirit of God, he is nothing but a human animal. Therefore, what a blessing it is that the holy and pure Spirit of God comes to "reason together" with fallen men! Since He does not cease to chastise even wicked men in order to save them, what will He not do for them who come before Him in prayer and supplication day and night? How gladly He will work in them, and how patiently He will carry them and lead them! Now examine yourself whether you are spiritual or carnal. Is the Spirit of God still striving with you as He does with the wicked world? Does He dwell in you? Do you follow Him? Are you led by the Spirit in the even way of truth and righteousness? Are you grieving the Spirit? Do you give more heed to the flesh than to the Spirit? If you do, you are in danger of losing the Spirit entirely and of becoming thoroughly carnal and base.

Holy Spirit, strong and mighty,
Thou who maketh all things new,
Make Thy work within me perfect,
Help me by Thy Word so true;
Arm me with that Sword of Thine,
And the victory shall be mine.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Mat. 28: 18. The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. Ps. 103: 19.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Ps. 123: 1.

When we add this to all the other glorious promises which the Lord has given concerning His ascension, our comfort and joy are complete. His love and faithfulness, His favor and grace, are immeasurable as we know from all His promises. But the same is true in regard to His power and greatness, His rule and dominion. We should no more doubt His ability than His willingness. God is the self-sufficient, almighty, all-directing love and mercy. Who is like unto Him? Who can be against us when He is for us? Who can stand against Him? Who can curse us when He blesses us? No matter how high He is exalted above all things, yet He sees the worm in the dust. Why, then, should He not look down to those who pray in confidence, to pious hearts whom He has purchased with His blood? How can He, who does not overlook anything, be able to overlook those who longingly look up to Him and trust in Him with all their heart? Dear heart, only turn to Him. His eye shall not overlook you. When the eye of almighty love looks down upon you, what do you fear?

He lives to grant me rich supply,
He lives to guide me with His eye,
He lives to comfort me when faint,
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

PENTECOST.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts 2: 1-4.

See what the unanimous prayers of believers here effected! Must not prayer always have the same result, when it is offered in the same confidence in the divine promises? Certainly; no prayer that comes from the heart, remains without its pentecostal blessing. No one prays in spirit and faith without being filled with the

Holy Ghost and the fire of the love of God. One never returns empty from prayer, if his prayer is deserving of the name. You may have a day of Pentecost every day if you pray every day earnestly and ardently for the Holy Ghost. If you are not full of your own self, if you are empty of your own spirit, and your heart cries to heaven in the Spirit, as a dry land for rain, the Holy Ghost will certainly not allow your heart to remain empty. But where the heart is full of one's own spirit, the Holy Ghost can not enter; for our own spirit is an unclean spirit, and what communion hath light with darkness?

Come, O come, Thou quickening Spirit,
Thou forever art divine:
Let Thy power never fail me,
Always fill this heart of mine;
Thus shall grace and truth and light
Chase away the gloom of night.

THE DAY AFTER PENTECOST.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. Rom. 8: 16. The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. — — — The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 1 Cor. 2: 11. 10. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Ps. 51: 11.

We read the truth in the Scriptures and when we have read or heard God's Word, we know what God has promised. But whether God means you and me;— whether He will give or has given you and me what He thus promises, is something concerning which our spirit as a rule is in doubt, and which it cannot in a living manner and with confidence believe before we receive the divine testimony concerning it in our heart. God only knows how it is with the faith of those who only believe the outward Word without the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit; who have but an historical faith, that is, who regard the thing as true, and appropriate it, without perceiving the working of divine grace by the Holy Spirit in the heart. It is impossible that such a faith as this can save, because it does not transform

the old manner of living into a new manner of living, and does not in reality unite the heart with Christ. When, on the other hand, the Holy Spirit gives testimony to my spirit, that is, testifies to and seals in my heart that which is written in the outward Word, then I do not only know what is written in the Bible, but also what is written in the fatherly heart of God for me, and for me particularly; for the Spirit of God searches the deep things of God that are hidden to me, and bears testimony thereof to me. Yet when you have this testimony, you must not lose it. When the Spirit of God testified to me yesterday, "Thou art a child of God," I must also to-day know how I stand with God and whether He has anything to censure in me. Otherwise I could not be at peace. Therefore it is written in 1 John 5: 10, that the believers have this witness in themselves; not that they have once had it. Hence David prays, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Let me always retain Him, that He may daily testify to me, daily assure me of God's favor and grace." He who abides in Christ, in him does Christ abide, and consequently also His Spirit, as Christ has promised. "For He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14: 16. 17).

O Holy Spirit, enter in,
Among these hearts Thy work begin,
Thy temple deign to make us;
Sun of the soul, Thou Light Divine,
Around and in us brightly shine,
To strength and gladness wake us.
Where Thou shinest,
Life from heaven
There is given.
We before Thee
For Thy precious gift implore Thee.

TUESDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. Ps. 42: 1. And thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. Ex. 17: 6. And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them. Is. 48: 21. And that rock was Christ. 1 Cor. 10: 4.

He who is not satisfied with the lukewarm water of mere knowledge; who is weary of the broken cisterns of this world's insipid wisdom; who thirsts for fresh and living water as a hart in the noonday heat; who knows the Rock from which flows the water of life; who understands how to smite this Rock: for him will flow the water of life in the dry desert of this life, and he, his people, his children, his friends and relatives, shall have enough to drink. The Lord procured for His people such abundance of water in the desert that they suffered no thirst during the forty years they remained there. A rock must give water to God's people. Was not this rock a type of Christ? Was it not, as St. Paul says, Christ Himself? Yes, beloved, we have this Rock among us and in us; he who believes on Him, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7: 38). This Rock gives water in abundance for the thirsty hearts of all nations on earth. As often as we smite His heart with the rod of believing, earnest prayer and child-like confidence, the water of life springs forth, spirit and unction, peace and grace, and they flow into our thirsty hearts so that we lack no good thing. He gives the Spirit without measure. But shepherd and flock, pastors and hearers, teachers and pupils, old and young, soul and body, must languish in the desert of this life if they do not thirst for this water, and believe on the Rock; if they do not pray in faith, continue in prayer, and walk in the enjoyment thereof. Take this to heart, you who are to instruct and direct others or be anything to them. First receive something yourself; pant for fresh water; smite the Rock so that it gives water, from which your people, your children, pupils and hearers, your subjects or at least your own heart, may drink. The heart of Jesus which is opened in the covenant, His wounds that are as a fountain—these you are to smite with your prayers; they are the fountain of living water. Jesus gives the Spirit (John 16: 7. 13. 14). In His name and at His intercession the Father sends the Holy Ghost (John 14: 16. 26). Mark this, that in your prayers you may not beat the air, but strike the right Rock,

out of which the water will infallibly spring as often as you smite it. Smite the Rock, that your people may drink. The Rock is Christ.

O mighty Rock, O Source of Life,
Let Thy dear Word, 'mid doubt and strife,
Be so within us burning,
That we be faithful unto death,
In Thy pure love and holy faith,
From Thee true wisdom learning!
Lord, Thy graces
On us shower,
By Thy power
Christ confessing,
Let us win His grace and blessing.

WEDNESDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Rom. 8: 26. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. 1 John 3: 24.

He who has a desire to pray is certainly not without the Holy Spirit and therefore not without Christ. Where the Spirit of prayer dwells, there Jesus dwells also, and the Father. A sure sign that you are a temple of God in the Spirit is this, that you find your greatest joy in communing with God in the Spirit and in walking with Jesus, that you delight in prayer. Prayer is not a mumbling of words; true, holy prayer is an unutterable groaning of the Spirit. As long as you talk much in prayer, there is yet much of your own fire, a not altogether clean, but, perhaps, a strange and unholy fire in it. But when the Holy Spirit lays the live coals in the censer and puts incense thereon, then the holy flame lifts us ever higher and the voice fails us; we can no longer find words. The heart and spirit say more without words in the presence of God than the lips can utter. We would, nevertheless, by no means condemn oral prayer. Everything has its time. I only mean that he who prays with the lips only, has little or

no use for the Holy Spirit; he relies too much on himself and thinks that he does not need the divine Advocate.

Lighten Thou our darkness,
Be Thyself our light;
Strengthen Thou our weakness,
Spirit of all might!

Spirit of adoption!
Make us overflow
With Thy sevenfold blessing,
And in grace to grow.

THURSDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel. Joel 2: 27. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Mat. 18: 20.

Yes, we may know that He is "in the midst" of us, whether it be two or two thousand who gather together in His name. We can experience it, even though the world disbelieve it, reject and rail at it as fanaticism. We experience it; this you know, who love the Savior with all your heart. God has said, Ye shall know that I am in the midst of you; consequently it must be possible, it must be an object of experience. Only he who experiences it, knows that it actually takes place; for it is a matter of the heart and can not be explained. It must also remain in the heart. Oh, that the Savior may have this joy, every time we come together, to let Himself be known by us. Oh, that we may thus be gathered together in His name, in a living faith and in true love to His name; then He shall never fail to come. He never fails. He cannot be absent from us. It is we who fail to come to Him; we do not see Him. But if we are gathered together in the Spirit, if we are intent on Him, and long only for Him, we shall surely feel His never-failing presence among us. Do not body and soul live and rejoice in the living God when He makes Himself known? Is not everything living, powerful, anointed and beautiful when He lets Himself be known among us? Is not everything dead, cold, dark and insipid when the heart lacks Him—when we do not

have Jesus in our midst? Therefore, nobody should in Christian congregations seek anything else but Jesus and His presence; for all other longing and desire are mere chaff blown away by the wind. The most beautiful sermon, the best book, does not please us when He is not found in it. "I am in the midst of you. Ye shall know it." So be it.

Lord Jesus, though but two or three
In Thy dear name assembled be,
Thou wilt among them show Thy face,
And bless them with Thy saving grace.

FRIDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses. Is. 44: 3. 4. **I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.** Rev. 21: 6. **I will sprinkle clean water upon you.** Ezek. 36: 25.

He that is not thirsty does not drink even though there be water in abundance. It is so also in regard to spiritual things. There is no lack of the water of life, no lack of the pouring out of the Spirit. According to the true promises of God, there can be no lack of these things. But there is a great lack of thirsty souls. There is too much thirst for earthly things, for gold, for showers of money, for the gratification of evil desires and sinful amusements; too much of devouring hunger for glory and honor among men, for praise and fame. Where is the thirst for the heavenly good things, for the pentecostal rain? God can not and will not give His water of life to others than those who thirst for it; who, like dry ground upon which everything in the summer is parched from the heat of the sun, thirst for refreshment, for comfort, power and life from above; who cry to heaven for this day and night. He who has sufficient in himself cannot receive the Spirit from God. If you are athirst and needy, but do not pray and continue in prayer, you will

not receive the Spirit, at least not in rich measure. But without God's Spirit you are dead in trespasses. Therefore pray, struggle and wait, till the rain falls; until the fountain of the water of life opens and your Savior refreshes you therewith; until He pours out His Spirit upon your seed; until you and yours shall spring up as among the grass, as "willows by the water courses." It is so written: it shall come to pass. What the Lord has caused to be written in the Bible, He will also fulfill. Pray and persevere in faith.

O gentle dew from heaven now fall
With power upon the hearts of all,
Thy tenderness instilling;
That heart to heart more closely bound,
Fruitful in kindly deeds be found,
The law of love fulfilling:
No wrath, no strife
Here shall grieve Thee,
We receive Thee,
Where Thou livest
Peace and love and joy Thou givest.

SATURDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications. Zech. 12: 10. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Ps. 51: 10.

To "the house of David" and to "the inhabitants of Jerusalem" belong all true disciples of Christ; for Christ and His kingdom is the house of David, the new Jerusalem, and its inhabitants are the believers who seek that only which is above—who, like David, make supplication for a new and "right spirit," for a "clean heart." The Lord forestalls our prayers. All that we are to pray for, He has already put in our mouth. He will even bestow upon us the Spirit of prayer, without whom we cannot pray. So merciful is the Lord, and yet our trust in Him is so small and weak. For that reason alone we ought to feel prompted to ask for the Spirit of grace and supplication; for grace makes the heart positive and steady, and the Spirit alone can quicken us. All our misery is a result of our lack of the Spirit. The

leanness of our soul, our sensuality, the emptiness of our heart—how deeply ought not these to bow us down! How powerfully ought they not drive us to pray daily that the Spirit of grace and supplication may be poured upon us; for the Lord will not bestow His Spirit upon us unless we pray for Him in great hunger and thirst and long for Him. But as most people undertake to do all in their own spirit, and even pray in such a spirit, they are and remain in their poverty and lack of Spirit, crippled Christians who know more than they do, and see farther than they are willing to go.

Left to ourselves, we shall but stray;
O lead us on the narrow way,
With wisest counsel guide us;
And give us steadfastness, that we
May henceforth truly follow Thee,
Whatever woes betide us:
Heal Thou gently,
Hearts now broken,
Give some token
Thou art near us,
Whom we trust to light and cheer us.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Mat. 28: 19. **For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.** 1 John 5: 7.

Thank God, we are not commanded to search out or explain the mystery of the Trinity—for then we should soon fail—but to believe and to rest in the triune God. We know enough of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost to be saved. What we do not know would, presumably, in our present state, make us no more blessed or better, if we did know. Otherwise God, who is love, would not have hid it from us. Hence do not rack your brains in trying to comprehend the Trinity, but surrender your heart to it, and love the God whose words and deeds all bear witness that He is love, and that through all eternity He can do naught but love. How dear you must be to the Father, you poor child of man, since

He has given you His Son! How dear you must be to the Son since He has given Himself for you! How dear you must be to the Holy Ghost since He so fondly instructs you, glorifies Jesus, the Savior, in your heart, renews you, and regenerates you to be a child of God and a joint heir with Christ! What good have you done since the Father and the Son will come and take up their abode in you? (John 14: 23). By what have you deserved to be the temple of the Holy Ghost? (1 Cor. 6: 19). What have you given the triune God who in baptism has received you into His house and made you partaker of the rights and claims of all His children and heirs? Keep silence, and worship! Love, believe, hope and surrender yourself. The mystery is even now great enough—how will it be when you shall look down into the abyss of His grace and love?

Praised be the Lord, my God,
He who forever liveth,
To whom the heavenly host
E'er praise and honor giveth;
Praised be the Lord, our God,
In whose great name we boast,
The Father, God the Son,
And God the Holy Ghost.

MONDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

The terrors of death are fallen upon me. Ps. 55: 4. **Christ should through death destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.** Heb. 2: 14. 15.

Jesus has by His death delivered us from eternal death, the death of the soul, consequently also from the fear of this death. But the body must pay the wages of sin: it must die. Even though by a true and living faith in Jesus we are sealed with His Spirit and certain of eternal life—because the Lord says, "Whosoever believeth on me shall never die, but have eternal life," and even though the body die, yet shall he live,—we must nevertheless walk through the valley of death. This

valley of death has not only caused David terror, but many other great men whose faith and piety can not be questioned have feared and trembled so that they cried, "The terrors of death are fallen upon me."—The Lord leads His own and leads them in ways that are beneficial to them; they must necessarily be beneficial, as it is the Lord who leads them. Nothing is so well adapted to unveil all the secret things of the human heart, now elated, now despondent, as the fear of death; if these peculiarities of the heart can not be taken away by other means, the Lord drives them out by the fear of death. Thus He trains faith in the best possible school. For when death falls upon you with the dark and terrible weapons of fear, you will seek a Master over death. Where is such a one to be found? In Christ. The fear of death drives you into the arms of the Lord of life. Flee to Jesus before you are driven to Him.

Naught shall my soul from Jesus sever,
Nor life nor death, things high nor low:
I take Him as my Lord forever,
My future trust, as He is now;
My God, for Jesus' sake I pray
Thy peace may bless my dying day.

TUESDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart. 1 Kings 3: 9. **Unite my heart to fear thy name.** Ps. 86: 11. **Incline not my heart to any evil thing.** Ps. 141: 4. **And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord.** Jer. 24: 7.

He who in earnest and truth desires to be pious and happy, does not trust his own heart; for "the heart is deceitful above all things" (Jer. 17: 9), and inclined to evil from youth up. Hence he prays for another heart. And God, who has promised to make "all things new," desires more than all else to renew and change the heart of men, because above all He requires a man's heart and desires to take possession of it. He has invited Himself and promised to make His abode in your heart (John

14: 23). But He cannot enter into an old, perverted heart, and remain therein. Therefore, He must first prepare your heart for Himself, just as a man makes his house ready before he moves into it. Let this inspire you with courage and strengthen your confidence: God is willing to grant your prayer for a new and obedient heart. His promise, "I will give it to you," is older than your prayer, "Give it to me." More than two thousand years ago He has promised what you now pray for. Even before you asked it, He was ready to give it. Therefore, set about it in earnest and implore Him until you receive and feel a new heart within you and the old heart can no more be found.

Holy Spirit, all divine,
Dwell within this heart of mine;
Cast down every idol throne,
Reign supreme, and reign alone.

WEDNESDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span — — — and weighed the mountains in scales. — — — Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. — — — It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. — — — Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? Is. 40: 12-28.

The greatness of the Lord is indescribable and incomprehensible. However sublimely Isaiah speaks of it, it is yet only a drop in the ocean, a grain of sand among the worlds. Who would think that He, concerning whom the prophet here speaks, is the same one whom he in the fifty-third chapter describes in a far different manner? And yet even on the cross He is none other than He who sits upon the circle of the earth and encompasses heaven and earth. Even as our Savior's greatness, omnipotence and sublimity must inspire awe—for we are but dust as against Him—so must that which

He has wrought for us in the flesh, as described in the chapter of Isaiah just mentioned, fill us with confidence, love, praise and joy. Behold, the great God, who measures the waters "in the hollow of His hand," and metes out heaven "with the span," stretches forth His hands and allows them to be pierced for our sake. He, before whom all nations are as a drop in a bucket, gives His last drop of blood for them, that He might by His blood and death draw them all to Himself and win them. What are we to admire the more—His exaltation or His humiliation? Which are we to worship the more—His power or His love? Undoubtedly both with like joy and thanksgiving. All that He is, He is for us and will continue to be for us forever; for His power and love do not become weary, neither do they faint.

Holy Ghost, with light divine,
Shine upon this heart of mine;
Chase the shades of night away,
Turn my darkness into day.

Let me see my Savior's face,
Let me all His beauties trace;
Show those glorious truths to me,
Which are only known to Thee.

THURSDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

For in many things we offend all. James 3: 2. **Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.** Ps. 90: 8. **Break off thy sins by righteousness.** Dan. 4: 27.

The apostles speak of numerous faults; the prophets and the men "after God's heart" speak of iniquities and secret sins. Accordingly, every one who lives in this mortal flesh feels in himself sin and iniquity and there is none clean under the sun. It is therefore a reprehensible and dangerous carelessness when a person pays so little attention to his heart and mind that he regards himself faultless and pure. Such a person is blind and gropes in the dark. Deceiving himself, he boasts of his righteousness to his own detriment. He

who sees faults in himself and through heedlessness suffers them to exist, confidently pleading these Scripture passages, does not know the mind of the apostles and of the prophets; to their own humiliation they honestly confessed their faults, not to lull themselves to sleep nor to call forth a false security, nor to comfort the slothful. To him who strives honestly to become faultless, the weakness of the saints is a comfort and a means of reassurance, but not a pillow for slothfulness. "Break off thy sins," says the prophet Daniel—and that is in fact what all the prophets say—"break off thy sins by righteousness," by the power which in Christ Jesus is bestowed upon you. His righteousness and power are granted you for nothing, not that you, like the wicked servant, are to dig it down into the earth, but that you should use it to the gaining of mastery over your sins.

We stand in deep repentance
Before Thy throne of love;
O God of grace, forgive us,
The stain of guilt remove;
Behold us while with weeping
We lift our eyes to Thee,
And, all our sins subduing,
Our Father, set us free.

FRIDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever. Ps. 37: 28. **But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.** 2 Thes. 3: 3. Cfr. 1 Pet. 1: 5. **Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.** Ps. 119: 33. 34.

Let it be your daily prayer that by the power of God through faith you may be "preserved" unto that salvation which is prepared for you. Who shall be able to preserve himself, unless he advance in the Lord and in the power of His might, and continue through prayer and supplication in constant touch with Him who has begun "a good work" in him, and who must also "perform" it? (Phil. 1: 6). Do not, however, say in a flippant

manner, "But I cannot preserve myself; the Lord must do it." Yes, God *must* do it. He can do it and He will do it; but He will not preserve you, if you, unconcerned about your salvation, neglect to watch and pray lest you fall into temptation. The Lord preserves His saints who earnestly and zealously pursue holiness. God does not forsake those who do not forsake Him. His eyes are upon those whose eyes are upon Him. Those who grasp and hold His hand are held by His hand. They are His saints; they are preserved for ever. But the secure, the heedless and drowsy saints, who, instead of preparing their lamps and supplying themselves with oil, sleep or amuse themselves, are not "preserved." They will remain standing without when the Bridegroom enters into His chamber.

Myself I cannot save,
Myself I cannot keep;
But strength in Thee I surely have,
Whose eyelids never sleep.

SATURDAY AFTER TRINITY SUNDAY.

Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. 1 Thes. 5: 11. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Tit. 2: 15. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Ps. 119: 5.

There is nothing more shameful and offensive than a lukewarm Christian, who shows no earnestness and yet wants to be regarded as a Christian; who talks much about Christianity without moving a finger to lead a true Christian life. God will spew such persons out of His mouth; for the world takes occasion to ridicule all Christianity and to fortify itself in ungodliness. Oh, that all such Christians would rather renounce Christ and the Christian name altogether, who regard themselves exempt from the conduct and earnestness of the true Christian. But he who really in true earnestness shows himself a genuine Christian in word and deed, must also do something for his brethren. He should not neglect to warn and reprove his brethren in true

earnestness for Christ's sake, that the name of God and Christ be not blasphemed. You must not forget yourself, but let your example and your conversation in Christ be an admonition and a sermon of reproof to others. The world never lacks earnestness in its undertakings, though they all lead to its destruction. Should the Christian be lukewarm, sluggish and careless in his eternal affairs and in the sacred cause of God on which his own salvation and the glory of God depend? No, those who do not take the kingdom of heaven "by violence" will not take it at all. The world, the flesh, and the devil will wrest the kingdom out of your hands if you take hold thereof in half-earnest only, if you do not grasp and hold it fast with heroic faithfulness.

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

From youth to hoary age,
My calling to fulfill:
Oh, may it all my powers engage
To do my Master's will!

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Blessed is he that considereth the poor. Ps. 41: 1. **He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.** Prov. 14: 21. **To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.** Heb. 13: 16.

What benefits the Lord has bestowed upon us! How much we have cost Him! He sacrificed His life-blood for us; not only all that He possessed did He sacrifice, but He has sacrificed Himself and is sacrificing Himself for us forever. He does not demand anything from us for Himself; but our poor and needy brethren, whom He calls *His* brethren, *His* poor, we are to give what we would gladly give Him, if He should need it. What would you do if, at the sight of heartrending misery, you discovered your Savior in the poor—if He should show you the wounds He has received for your sake—if He were to say to you, "Behold, this have I done for you

when I saw you lying in your blood; what have you done for me?" Tell me, what would you do if you saw and heard the Savior bodily in the poor? Then do it even now; for His word must be as important to you as His person. He who does good to the suffering, plants for himself a paradise, a garden, the fruits of which will refresh him in time of need. Every charitable deed is a seed sown for eternity, which will not fail to bear fruit. Plant daily at least one tree in this garden; in a year you will have three hundred and sixty-five trees; at last you will have a large orchard. However, do not set out your plants with the purpose of pleasing yourself only. Let not your left hand know what your right hand has planted.

Thy face, with reverence and with love,
We in Thy poor would see;
O may we minister to them,
And in them, Lord, to Thee!

MONDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And the Lord direct your hearts unto the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. 2 Thes. 3: 5. In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God — — — by love unfeigned. 2 Cor. 6: 4-6.

The most beautiful attachment of the heart, and one which St. Paul desires all to have, is that which has the love of God and the patience of Christ as its object. Any other inclination of the heart is perverted. Examine yourself to find what the object of your heart is. What do you wish the most and most intensely? What things do you busy yourself with most and oftenest? Who is it that really lives in your heart? What, as a rule, goes in and out of your heart? What causes your heart the keenest sorrow, and what causes it to rejoice the most? Ask your heart often these questions in prayer and supplication. Then you will learn to know its true bent. You will understand if it is turned to the love of God and the patience of Christ or to the love of the world, love of self, love of money, love of honor or of carnal lust. If you are aware of a false

inclination in your heart, a perverted disposition to objects aside from God and Christ, then weep over your misery, and pray incessantly to Christ that He may give your heart the predilection for His love and cross. The patience of Christ is His willing suffering and death for us, His obedience unto death, which should make us patient and obedient. Do not paint your love in fine colors, that is, do not plume yourself with a hypocritical love of the tongue, but pray God for an unpainted, unfeigned, honest love, which shows itself no less ardent and active inwardly than outwardly and which in a straight course is directed toward God and Christ alone.

Uphold me in the doubtful race,
Nor suffer me again to stray;
Strengthen my feet, with steady pace
Still to press forward in Thy way,
That all my powers, with all their might,
In Thy sole glory may unite.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

He that saith that he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. 1 John 2: 6. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. 1 John 4: 17.

He who says, "The Lord is my strength and righteousness," must let the righteousness and strength of Christ, in which he believes, become apparent in his life and conduct, that his life and deeds shall not give the lie to that which he professes with his mouth. Many glory in the righteousness of Christ, but few possess it and show it in their deeds. St. Paul says, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3: 27). But then Christ must also be seen. If you have put on the garment of Christ's righteousness, where is it? Show it to me. If you say, "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness my beauty are, my glorious dress," you must also be beautiful, as beautiful to look upon as Christ. Everybody must be able to see

it and say, "He has put on and walks in the garment of Christ's righteousness; there is no longer a single thread of the soiled garment of the world, of the coat contaminated by the flesh, of the fig-leaves af Adam, upon him." Oh, that we would not play with words without heart and repeat professions without truth and the assent of the heart! Oh, that we would not put on an imaginary robe, a false faith of the mouth! Oh, that we would not appropriate and count our own that which we do not possess, which we cannot prove to be ours by our deeds, and which no eye can discover in us! Vain talk will not be a lasting garment, but a cobweb, in which we can not stand before God. Oh, that we might lay hold on Christ and His righteousness, clothe our heart, mind and conduct therein, live and die therein!

Father of eternal grace,
Glorify Thyself in me!
Meekly beaming in my face,
May the world Thine image see.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Is. 35: 4. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. Is. 40: 1. 2.

This is the Gospel for the poor, "fearful," and sorrowful souls who mourn because of sin and struggle against faint-heartedness and despair; it is not a Gospel for gay and reckless sinners, nor for secure, lukewarm and slothful Christians, who generally appropriate all the comforting passages in the Scriptures, which, however, do not concern them, in order that they may continue to sleep quietly, remain secure and reassure themselves with a false consolation. But for those who earnestly struggle against faults and sins, whose conscience is bruised, and who will not accept consolation, one can not often enough repeat these comforting pas-

sages to inspire them with courage. Yes, dear bruised and broken soul, take courage; confidence in your infinitely kind Commiserator is becoming to you; that saves you; that is pleasing to God. Your despondency and faint-heartedness cause Him neither glory nor joy and bring certain death to your soul and body. Be bold for once! Throw yourself into His arms who in the above quoted passages so kindly invites you and comforts you with such divine gentleness. Cast yourself into the open arms of your Sympathizer, which are stretched out to you in these words. Do not by despondency, hopelessness and despair rush into the claws of the enemy and murderer of your soul, who with fearful thoughts only desires to destroy you and to drag you down to himself into the pit. Rather rush into the sea of God's mercy, of Christ's love and grace, which is deep enough, great, broad and high enough, to receive even you, wash you, cleanse you, and make you happy.

His Holy Spirit dwelleth
Within my willing heart,
Tames it when it rebelleth,
And soothes the keenest smart.
He crowns His work with blessing,
And helpeth me to cry,
"My Father!" without ceasing,
To Him who reigns on high.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me. Is. 27: 4. 5. I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. Gen. 15: 1. He is a buckler to all those that trust in him. Ps. 18: 30. Nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications. Ps. 31: 22.

The believing "nevertheless," has been the shield of all the prophets and apostles, of all cross-bearers and soldiers of the Lord, by which they have broken and turned aside all the darts of temptation that would make us weary and faint-hearted. Says David in Ps. 73: 23, *"Nevertheless* I am continually with Thee,

(O Lord);" and in verse 26, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." Thus also does Isaiah exclaim, "Though there be war everywhere, in me, without and within me, *nevertheless* He will bring me peace." Though at every moment I seem to sink, *nevertheless* He will uphold me if I only trust in Him. The Lord Himself calls to us through all the prophets: Fear not in the terrible storms and dangers of life; "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Is. 41: 10). Oh, His hand will not let go of you, only hold it fast! There is no abyss so deep that it can not bring you out; there is no mountain so high that it can not lift it away or carry you across. When all the troubles of life are past, He will Himself be your "exceeding great reward," as now with His powerful arm He is your "buckler."

Every human tie may perish,
Friend to friend unfaithful prove;
Mothers cease their own to cherish,
Heaven and earth at last remove:
But no changes
Can attend Jehovah's love.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Cor. 1: 9. With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. Ps. 130: 7.

In temptation we cannot realize the fulness of grace which is opened to us in Christ. It is greater than any mortal can believe or imagine. Who can fathom the depths of the sea? Who can measure the heights of heaven? Yet the sea is not a drop compared with the fulness of the grace of God in Christ. His mercy is higher than the heavens. But in the hour of temptation, in the hot battle with the world and sin, the fulness of

His grace is not seen nor perceived. Then grace seems so far away, that the mountains of God appear to us as grains of sand, and the sea of the fulness of His grace as a drop. Or, even if one believes in His faithfulness and mercy, yet he cannot apply it to himself and appropriate it, though he may do so in regard to others. Even then the Spirit helps our infirmities and shows us the open door of grace if only we pray and knock at the door. If the heart be upright, it will find this door; it will be delivered from anxiety and comforted. Often secret plots lie hidden in the heart; secret ties, from which the heart does not wish to be severed, and one remains a captive. He who uprightly, with all his heart and without reserve, surrenders himself to grace, desiring wholly to belong to the Lord, finds grace at once. But he who holds the tie with one hand, however much he may wish to break them with the other; whose will is divided, desires in reality to remain in his bonds, and grace cannot make him free against his will. Surrender yourself wholly; then Christ and His grace will surrender to you in all fulness.

And though it tarry till the night,
And round till morning waken,
My heart shall ne'er mistrust Thy might,
Nor count itself forsaken.
Do thus, O ye of Israel's seed,
Ye of the Spirit born indeed,
Wait for your God's appearing.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. 2 Cor. 4: 8. **Faint not when thou art rebuked of him.** Heb. 12: 5. **When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord.** Jonah 2: 7.

The apostles and prophets also know and speak of fears and temptations to become despondent. You believe it impossible that such men, who were guided immediately by the Spirit of God, also must experience such things. You think that after you have begun to

love the Lord you shall know no fear; that He will carry you upon His hands. This He does, even in the midst of your fear and anxiety. What would otherwise become of you? A Christian must frequently experience anxiety—that is unavoidable. But he shall never fall into utter despondency. But if you are near to despair, then remember the Lord, as Jonah did, who also was troubled at heart when he was in the deep—in the belly of the fish. But he turned his thoughts to the Lord who is no less able to save in the deep than on solid land; who has the strength to help just as well in the belly of the monster as in the quiet chamber. Therefore, even though tribulations, want and afflictions have swallowed you up, and compassed you about, as the fish did Jonah; though you are covered by misfortune and misery as he was covered by the billows of the sea, turn your thoughts toward the Lord who also was afraid (Luke 12: 50), and who says to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not" (Is. 35: 4).

Almighty is the Lord most holy,
His least word is with power endowed
To set on high the poor and lowly,
And cast to earth the rich and proud.
Most wondrous work God doeth when
He humbleth or exalteth men.

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Ps. 77: 9. The mercy of the Lord endureth forever. 2 Chron. 5: 13. Great are thy tender mercies, O Lord. Thy mercy endureth for ever. Ps. 119: 156; 136: 26.

However convinced David was that the mercy of God was unbounded and that His grace and "mercy endureth forever," he nevertheless often fell into such moods that it seemed to him that God's mercy had come to an end, and that His grace and mercy had turned away from him. When the Lord leads you, beloved, in like ways—when He hides His face from you or shows Himself unkind and angry—do not lose courage. The most intimate friends of God have had to experience the same.

Therefore, speak to Him as they did, and express and disclose to Him what your heart feels. If you must say to Him to-day, "Are Thy tender mercies gone forever?" to-morrow or some other time you will not be able sufficiently to praise His mercy; the Lord will put a new song upon your lips and at length you shall feel constrained to exclaim, "His mercy endureth forever!" If you have once acknowledged and experienced this, then think upon it and hold it fast in faith, even when you do not feel it—when you feel the reverse. You believe that the sun shines and continues to shine even when by an eclipse it is covered with a dark veil. Likewise the Lord is always the same, even though He should seven times a day appear different to you. Trust in His word and not in that which presents itself to your senses.

God will have it that we ask,
And it shall be given;
Who pray alway, alway bask
In the grace of heaven.
Ere they plead
Will He heed,
Strengthen, keep, defend them,
And deliverance send them.

MONDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Ps. 32: 1. Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord. Ps. 144: 15. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him — — — that maketh the Lord his trust. Ps. 34: 8; 40: 4. Blessed are the undefiled in the way — — — that keep his testimonies. Ps. 119: 1. 2.

To be well and happy is something which all men desire; but men do not seek health and happiness where they are to be found. Before a person has received the forgiveness of sins from God in Christ and testimony and confirmation thereof by His Spirit, he can nowhere be really well; he cannot be really happy. To receive forgiveness and grace is the door and the beginning of true well-being. If he progress in grace; if he allows

his Redeemer to heal all his diseases; strengthen him in all his weaknesses; enlighten him on his dark path; cleanse and sanctify him by His Spirit; if he learn to remain in Jesus, to walk perfectly and blamelessly in Him, then the good and kind Savior will show the treasures of His grace, the blessings of His salvation, and make him "abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house;" He will let the soul daily more and more taste of His kindness; He will bestow upon him the divine nature, the clean, holy mind, and make him like unto His own image in righteousness, blessedness and glory. Then the soul has found true health, true happiness, that shall not be taken away. The soul rests in the arms of Jesus. Who shall tear it from Christ? Who shall rob it of its joy? No one shall stir the soul up, nor awake it (Cant. 2: 7).

The man is ever blest,
Who shuns the sinner's ways;
Among their counsels never stands,
Nor takes the scorner's place.

But makes the law of God
His study and delight
Amid the labors of the day,
And watches of the night.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

When it pleased God — — — to reveal his Son in me — — — I conferred not with flesh and blood. Gal. 1: 15. 16. The Spirit of truth shall glorify me. John 16: 14. We all, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord. 2 Cor. 3: 18.

We can not truly learn to know Christ by the aid of letters and human instruction; we can not comprehend Him with our reason. We can not grasp Him in any other way than by the Father's revealing Him and the Spirit's glorifying Him to us. The Holy Ghost must picture Christ before the eye of the soul as He dies upon the cross for us; He must make clear to us of what significance the death on the cross is to us. Then we

behold the glory and love of God with open face in beautiful splendor, the Holy Ghost having removed the veil that lies upon our natural understanding and opened our heart to His illuminating rays. But he to whom Christ is thus revealed, confers, like St. Paul, no longer with flesh and blood, but hastens without any further questioning and surrenders himself with all that he is and has to Him who has given him Himself, and the soul remains His forever; oh, where Christ, the Savior of the world, has taken up His abode, there such questions as these can no longer be asked, "Shall I now give up the world, sin and myself? What will the world say? What will this one or that one think?" Then the soul has no other longing, no other desire, no other question but this, "How can I please my Savior? How can I incessantly enjoy Him? How can I always be with Him? How can I always have the joy of possessing Him such as He in His love and as He in kindness reveals Himself to me?"

I thank Thee, uncreated Sun,
That Thy bright beams on me have shined;
I thank Thee who hast overthrown
My foes, and healed my wounded mind;
I thank Thee Whose enlivening voice
Bids my freed heart in Thee rejoice.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I will be glad in the Lord. Ps. 104: 34. **I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.** Ps. 34: 1. **Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.** Ps. 103: 2. 3.

Happy are you if out of the fulness of the heart you can say, "I will be glad in the Lord." Blessed are you if your heart has reason to be glad in the Lord; if not only your mouth is full of praise and joy, but if also your heart is full of the grace and mercy of the Lord so that the mouth speaks out of the fulness of the heart. If He has bestowed upon you the forgiveness of sins and given in your heart a letter and a seal

thereof which are not antiquated nor rendered unreadable by new sins and acts of infidelity, but which are renewed and refreshed every day by new evidences of grace from the Lord. Then the Holy Ghost daily testifies that He has forgiven you all your sins; and not that only, but He also heals all your diseases; His blood cleanses you from all your uncleanness. Who then shall hinder your joy? Who will refuse to join you in singing praises? Never forget this grace but remind yourself of it every day. There are many who want the forgiveness of their sins, but are unwilling to be healed from their diseases. Therefore their joy can not be perfect. God grant that such joy be not false and hypocritical! The Savior desires both to forgive and to heal. His name "Jesus" means the Savior, the Healer. He cures; He restores the soul to health (Ps. 23: 3). He who does not allow himself to be healed from his diseases after his sins have been forgiven, is in danger of forgetting "that he was purged from his old sins," and is "blind" (2 Pet. 1: 9).

Oh, that all may seek and find
Every good in Christ combined!
Him let Israel still adore,
Trust Him, praise him evermore.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was passed, Jesus was found alone. Luke 9: 35. 36.

All the world ought to listen to this voice coming from the skies. But people find it hard to turn their heads and ears upward, because they are charmed and captivated by the voices which they hear from below. The world rings too much in their ears. They cannot heed the voice of God. As yonder by the Jordan and before all the people (Mat. 3: 17; John 12: 28), so God here solemnly declares to the disciples that Jesus is His well-beloved Son, a Preacher to be heard and believed above all other preachers. But

the gracious God Himself, as all His messengers, must complain, "Who hath believed our report?" God has preached from heaven and given His Son a wonderful testimony; He has offered Him to the world; He has set Him apart and confirmed Him as a Preacher and a Teacher, and, behold, the world reviled Him and crucified Him as a blasphemer. He whom God Himself has declared to be His Son? Yes, and until this day the world has been unwilling to hear the Son of God. Who, then, is to preach to the world, since it will not hear this Preacher who preaches from such an exalted pulpit, from the skies, who speaks kindly and lovingly? Will you not, dear reader, believe the Father's preaching concerning the Son? Will you not follow the word and drawing of the Father and go to the Son, as it is written, "Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me?". (John 6: 45). Will you not love Him above all things, whom the Father loves above all things? Will you not receive Him since the Father offers Him to you and bestows Him upon you from heaven? When the disciples heard the heavenly sermon "they saw no man, save Jesus only" (Mat. 17: 8). Moses had departed; Elias had departed—they knew with certainty that the Father spoke to them of the Son, and not of Moses and Elias. They were to hear the Son only; they should preach the Son, not Moses. He who is willing to be a hearer, may daily hear the Father's sermon; for the Father always testifies concerning the Son and draws men to the Son. Oh, that we might hear the Son and follow Him!

Beautiful Savior!
Lord of the nations!
Son of God and Son of man!
Glory and honor,
Praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine!

FRIDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions. Ps. 132: 1. Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book? Ps. 56: 8. Thou feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure. Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbors; and our enemies laugh among themselves. Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved. Ps. 80: 5-7.

As we see from these complaints, the Lord has always allowed afflictions and trials to come upon His elect; they have been fed "with the bread of tears." This must not mislead any soul, but rather establish and comfort it. Tell your distress to the Lord, as David did when captured by the Philistines. He prayed the Lord to note his flight; to see his sorrows; to take account of his woes; to put his tears into His "bottle," that they might not be shed in vain. He prayed that through the mercy of the Lord a harvest of joy might follow the sowing of tears. Thus prayed these old heroes of faith. They were fully convinced that God counts all tears and will not let any of them be shed in vain. The Lord keeps close watch over our afflictions. It is a great comfort in afflictions to lift up the eyes to Him who sees all things and to say in faith, "Thou, Lord, seeest me." No man can fully understand him who is afflicted; the Lord alone can comprehend. He understands the glances you send up to Him. Do not trust in man nor in the comfort that men give. Seek the face of the Lord; that alone helps, comforts and strengthens; that alone sweetens and makes up for all afflictions.

Sing, pray, and do as God hath told thee;
Be diligent in all thy ways;
And, trusting Him to bless, uphold thee,
Success shall crown thee all thy days.
The Lord will not forsake the one
Who puts his trust in Him alone.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Ps. 55: 22. For the needy shall not alway be forgotten; the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever. Ps. 9: 18.

We can easily let go of many things and throw them away; but to cast anything upon the Lord is something we do not understand, or at any rate understand very poorly. According to this passage as well as other words from the mouth of our Savior, He stands before us, beholds us in our misery and anxiety, fear and trembling. This cuts Him to the quick and He cries out to us, "My child, only come hither with all that causes you pain; cast the burden that oppresses you upon me; I see you cannot carry it." But we will not, we can not separate from the hated burden; we do not give Him what we ourselves can not bear. We hold that fast which He in kindness would take away from us. Are we not perverted and obstinate to our own hurt? But he who has learned the art of casting everything upon the Lord; who knows how near He is and how willingly He receives all that we lay upon Him, remains without fear and anxiety; he trusts in the Lord's promises and the infallible consolation of the Scriptures. It is impossible for the Lord to forget or forsake the afflicted one who trusts in Him. He will not forget nor forsake you. He only tries your hope, your confidence, and your resignation to the will of God. How could you prove your hope and confidence if no afflictions befell you? How could your patience be developed without exercise, without tribulation? Cast, therefore, your sorrows upon Him who keeps hand and heart open to take your sorrows from you. Trust in Him; He shall do it. Your sorrow is a bed of thorns which you prepare for yourself. Cast yourself into His arms and you shall lie upon roses.

Thou on the Lord rely,
So safe shalt thou go on.

Fix on His worth thy steadfast eye,
So shall thy work be done.

No profit canst thou gain
By self-consuming care;
To Him command thy cause; His ear
Attends the softest prayer.

THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

None eye pitied thee. — — — And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. Ezek. 16: 5. 6. **The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.** Is. 29: 19.

When no one takes pity on us in our misery; when the poor soul nowhere finds comfort and rest, then the Lord passes by, not as the priest and the Levite, but as the Samaritan. As He sees deeper into the wounds of your soul than they, and far better knows the danger in which you are, He draws near to you with the most tender mercy. Does He see you polluted in your own blood? Do you bewail and lament your sins with tears of blood? It breaks His heart, and He hastens to help you and to say to you, "Live. I will; be thou clean." And what He says comes to pass; what He commands is accomplished. Your ears, that heretofore have been deaf, shall hear; your eyes, that heretofore have been blind, shall see how kindly He stands before your heart, how lovingly He speaks the word of peace. Your heart, heretofore closed to all comfort, will open, and His life-giving consolation will enter and impart to you life and joy in such fulness that you shall say, "It is too much, O Lord, it is too much; I am not worthy of all the tender mercies and all the faithfulness which Thou bestowest upon me." Then the poor soul has peace in the Lord; He does not reject sinners that cry to Him. Your heart shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel, who forgiveth all thy iniquities and healeth all thy diseases.

Ye sinners, come, 'tis mercy's voice;
The gracious call obey.
Mercy invites to heavenly joys,
And can you yet delay?

MONDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous. Is. 60: 19. 21.

Here all things are forever changeable; now joy, now sorrow. Now we walk in the light of the midday sun in perfect peace, in blessed nearness to the Lord; again all is dark and a black cloud hides from us the nearness of the Lord. Sin breaks loose upon us and threatens to devour us. We journey here as weary wanderers in a strange and dangerous land, which is filled with robbers and murderers. We long for our home-country where only the righteous dwell; where "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. 85: 10); where the sun shall no more go down, and where the Lord shall be our "everlasting light." Still we might even here enjoy more lasting quiet, and a more undisturbed peace, if our eyes were turned more to Him who shines as the everlasting sun in our soul, who is our light even in the midst of darkness (Micah 7: 8). It is only the fickleness of our heart and the weakness of our faith which cause this change in us; we do not remain unchangeably in our Savior who is forever faithful and unchangeable. He who believes in Him has the unchangeable comfort, which always sustains his courage, "The Lord shall be unto us an everlasting light."

Like the sun's reviving ray,
Make Thy love, with tender glow,
All our coldness melt away,
Warm and cheer us forth to go,
Gladly serve Thee and obey
All our life's short earthly day!

TUESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. Ps. 118: 8. In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Ps. 62: 7.

From first to last the Scriptures exhort us to put our trust in God, who is most worthy of our confidence. They warn us against putting our trust in man, in creatures, yea, they curse him who trust in man, and make flesh his arm, while they promise all happiness and blessing to him who trust in the Lord (Jer. 17: 5. 7. 8). He shall be as a tree planted by the waters and as a rock in the sea. We trust, nevertheless, so readily in man, look constantly around for human stays and forget the Lord and His arm as though He did no exist, as though He had not promised us anything. Thus hard does man find it to trust in that which is eternally established, the unchangeable, which he does not see. He trusts in the straw that he sees; he leans rather upon a reed that he can grasp with the hand, and which breaks and cuts his hand before he has really leaned upon it. But he who has learned to trust in the Lord, who makes a path in the sea and a way in the deep waters, stands in the storm as a rock in the ocean, assaulted and persecuted, and yet immovable upon the Foundation which can not be shaken. He that does not look at the danger, nor the rolling billows of tribulation, but at the Pilot, who has yet never suffered shipwreck, whose ship yet never has been destroyed, stands fast in God as if there were nothing but Jesus and God, no danger, no calamity.

Commit thy way, confiding,
When trials here arise,
To Him whose hand is guiding
The tumults of the skies.
There clouds and tempests, raging,
Have each their part assigned;
Will God, for thee engaging,
No way of safety find?

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. — — — He hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6: 54-56.

According to this the Lord's Supper is a real participation in and a true reception of all the fruits of the death of Christ or of Jesus Christ Himself. He who eats in a living faith eats Jesus, has the life of Jesus, Jesus Himself living in him. He lives by and in Christ. Thus He Himself has said in John 6: 58. There are, however, many who eat the Lord's Supper without being fed and strengthened, because they do not eat in living faith. That which lives hungers after food and must eat or die. Thus also in regard to the living faith: Jesus is its food after which it hungers; in the eating thereof it lives and is sustained; without it faith must die. Where there is no hunger after Jesus, there is no faith, no life in faith, consequently no true eating of Him; there are only words, thought and imagination, only an outward, bodily eating, by which the soul is not fed nor nourished. One who is dead does not know how to eat nor can he eat. He who is alive and hungry does not need to be taught how to eat. The faith which is dead asks in a surprised and sneering tone, What does it mean to eat Jesus? It means precisely what Jesus says in John 6: 57, and as St. Paul says in Eph. 5: 14, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Christ will show you what it means to eat Himself through faith, and have Him dwelling in thy heart. You will become hungry after Him, and the hunger will teach you to eat. Therefore, the Lord's Supper has always been called the Sacrament of the Living, because, as a spiritual food, it presupposes spiritual life to be nourished and sustained by this food. Where there is no life, no food is needed. The dead cannot eat. Baptism awakens the dead; the Lord's Supper nourishes, sustains and strengthens those

who are awake and living. Verily, in the Lord's Supper He is as near to us as He can possibly be on earth.

We taste Thee, O Thou Living Bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the Fountain Head,
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

THURSDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Lord will not cast off for ever. But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. Lam. 3: 31. 32. **Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord.** Ps. 130: 1.

He that would ascend to the heights must first go down to the depths. He who would go to heaven must first go through a hell. Scarcely any one gets through this world without great tribulation. Have not St. Paul and all the elect, in the old covenant and in the new, had to enter into the kingdom of God through much tribulation? Must not Christ enter into all the depths and abysses of human suffering? Must not His soul be sorrowful unto death? Even though His sufferings were chiefly as an atonement for our sins, in that God permitted the trespasses of us all to meet Him, the sorrows of Jesus are a source of consolation to us. Christ's sufferings are the more comforting to us in proportion as we believe that by His sorrows He has turned away eternal sorrow from us all, and that we in all our sorrow may turn to Him with all confidence. Therefore, when you are sorrowful and lie in the depths as David did, join your Savior on the Mount of Olives. He is able to comfort you; He knows what a sorrowful heart means. But He also causes you sorrow that you may know what He has suffered for you and how highly He has loved you. He will not let you die in your grief; He will take pity on you. Only seek Him and you shall find an end of sorrow.

O draw me, Savior, after Thee!
So shall I run and never tire.
With gracious words still comfort me;
Be Thou my Hope, my sole Desire.
Free me from every weight: nor fear,
Nor sin can come, if Thou art here.

FRIDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee! Ps. 71: 19. **Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins.** Gal. 1: 4. **Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.** Ps. 40: 5.

All the works of God are "high" and incomprehensible. But the greatest work and wonder which He has done for us children of men is and remains forever that He, the Creator of all things, humbled Himself and made Himself a surety and a ransom for His creatures who were lost in debt. To create all the worlds cost Him only a word, "Let there be!" and they stood forth. But to regenerate the perverted creatures and make them good and new, cost Him the deepest humiliation in sinful flesh, the worst disgrace, the most bitter pain and the most ignominious death. A soul who contemplates his Savior's love upon the cross, who beholds Him in His disgrace and in the throes of death, cannot often enough exclaim, "Lord, who is like unto Thee! What can be compared with Thee! Many are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done and Thy thoughts which are to us-ward." We cannot reckon them and yet we cannot be silent concerning them; we cannot praise them as they deserve to be praised; and yet—who should praise anything but these great works of God, before which all that is called great becomes as naught and all that is esteemed glorious vanishes as a dream?

From all that dwell below the skies
Let the Creator's praise arise;
Let the Redeemer's name be sung
Through every land, by every tongue.

SATURDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come. 1 Cor. 11: 24-26.

It was a matter of great importance to our Savior so to imprint Himself upon our hearts and memories that we should never forget Him. He therefore gave what no one before Him has given and no one after Him will give in remembrance of himself: His flesh and blood, even Himself. Who is it that gives his friend himself as a remembrance and as a token of his love? The Lord's Supper should not only be a memorial meal to us, not only a solemn remembrance of His death, but something still more, namely, a means of nourishment, a close communion with the life and death of Jesus and a renewal thereof in the inner man. He that vividly realizes and confidently believes: "This body which is given for you; this blood which is shed for you," is a pledge of the life of Jesus in me, a pledge of my eternal life in and with Him in His Kingdom; my food and sustenance on this earthly pilgrimage; this Supper is a living and visible token of my reconciliation with God; of the forgiveness of my sins; of my fellowship with Christ and the Father; of my brotherhood with all the elect members of the body of Jesus—"for as we many eat the one bread we are all one body;"—this manna which comes down from heaven gives me eternal life and sustains it in me; this bread of life preserves me from eternal death and shall once quicken my body: he who in a living manner thinks and believes all this and even more—for no one can utter all that is contained in this testament—he who has eaten and enjoyed it and transformed it into pith and substance—how rich, blessed, and strong his soul becomes thereby!

Lord, grant me that thus strengthened
With heavenly food, while here

My course on earth is lengthened
I serve with holy fear:
And when Thou callest my spirit
To leave this world below,
I enter, through Thy merit,
Where joys unmingled flow.

THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Bear ye one another's burdens. Gal. 6: 2. We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. Rom. 15: 1. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Eph. 4: 32.

What burdens have not we laid upon our Savior! "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53: 4. 6). How quietly and peacefully the Lamb of God walked beneath our burden, not even opening His mouth! He says, "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities" (Is. 43: 24). He does not say it in order to complain or to reproach us, for He adds immediately afterwards, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Is. 43: 25). He desires to show us how we also are silently to bear the burdens which others by their faults lay upon us: we are not to remember them, but to forget and forgive all insults. Or shall we receive forgiveness from God and not forgive our brethren who have sinned against us? Shall He not then deal with us as He dealt with the servant in the Gospel narrative? (Mat. 18: 33. 34). If the burden that others lay upon you becomes too heavy, look to the Lamb of God and ask, Who has laid this heavy burden upon Thee? Who has scourged and wounded Thee? Who has slain Thee? And why dost Thou keep so silent and suffer so patiently? The answer will then come of itself: your duty will be plain.

Fain I would be as Thou art,
Give me Thy obedient heart.
Thou art pitiful and kind:
Let me have Thy loving mind.

MONDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

His name shall endure forever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Ps. 72: 17. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Acts 2: 21.

What a source of joy it is that He was called Jesus, a Savior, not only for the apostles and the first Christians, not only for one people, or for one century; but that He forever is called Jesus and remains Jesus, a Savior, for all times and eternities, and for all men. Though we do not endure, "His name shall endure." Let us then continue to believe in His name. He has saved us and He will save us, because we believe in His name. He will forever save all who call upon Him, who bow before Him. Therefore, do not lose courage; hope for yourself and for all men. "His name shall endure forever," that is, His name shall conquer on earth and in heaven throughout all eternity. If your heart lives in the power of His name and salvation, then you can wish, and hope, and confidently pray, that Jesus who saves may become known to all, may be believed by all, and be eternal salvation to all for whom He died. If you love His name and know what it is to you; if it inspires you with peace and grace as often as you think of it, then you will also desire this salvation for all your brethren and for all the world. You will in earnest prayer and supplication long for the day of Jesus Christ, when He shall be glorified in all His saints and worshipped by all tongues.

To Jesus every knee shall bow,
And every tongue confess Him,
And we unite with saints in light,
Our only Lord to bless Him.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Heb. 12: 1. 4. Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully. Jer. 48: 10.

Thus the Lord spoke by Jeremiah when He urged war against Moab. He adds, "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood. Moab shall be spoiled, and gone up out of her cities" (Jer. 48: 10. 15), saith the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Since it was a matter of such importance to the Lord that the Moabites be destroyed, and since He so strongly urged the campaign against them, must it not be a matter of still greater importance to Him that the Moabites in your soul, that is, everything which disturbs the peace and quiet of your soul, everything that does not cling to the Lord, your sinful nature and worldly-mindedness, be destroyed, and that he kingdom of the Lord be established in you? If every one who did not fight unto blood but was sluggish against the Moabites was cursed by the Lord, shall you inherit the blessing if you are sluggish in the battle against the world, sin, and your own flesh? Every moment the Moabites disturb your boundaries, yea, perhaps they have already invaded your country, your inner man, and rule over you? You must take the sword of the Lord and the shield of faith and fight without becoming weary, until there shall be peace in the land, until Moab shall be destroyed and the fortifications of Satan shall be scaled and demolished. Lukewarmness and slothfulness bring the curse. Earnest fighting, unwearied running in the course of the battle, bring blessing, peace and salvation. Hear how St. Paul reprimands the Hebrews, because they let their courage fail them, because they so soon become weary and ready to surrender their weapons, while yet they had not fought unto blood or shown any real earnestness. As long as there lives a single Moabite, a single enemy of peace, in your heart, you must not surrender your weapons. Slothfulness is the road to hell; earnest battle the road to eternal peace.

At the sign of triumph
Satan's host doth flee;
On then, Christian soldiers,
On to victory!

Hell's foundations quiver
At the shout of praise;
Brothers, lift your voices,
Loud your anthems raise!

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. 2 Tim. 2: 12. Love endureth all things. 1 Cor. 13: 7. Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. Ps. 34: 19. Take the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. James 5: 10.

The Christian is appointed to suffer afflictions in this world (1 Thes. 3: 3), as eternal joy is appointed for him in the life to come. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy" (1 Pet. 4: 12. 13). He who drinks from the cup of affliction, shall drink of the wine of joy hereafter. To him who gets a true conception of the joy and glory which are prepared for believing cross-bearers, and who never loses sight thereof, the burdens of the present afflictions, though heavy as lead, will hardly seem as a grain of sand compared with the towering mountains of divine joy. He is ashamed to dread a grain of sand, and not to be able to overcome such an insignificant thing; he joins in the song of the apostles (2 Cor. 4: 17. 18), and even glories in tribulation, because "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed" (Rom. 5: 3-5).

To Thee I tell each rising grief,
For Thou alone canst heal;
Thy Word can bring a sweet relief
For every pain I feel.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14: 6.

There are many ways, but only one true way. There are many words, but little of truth, much of pretence, but little of true essence and life among men, because they are few whose one and all is Christ. We do not desire to be in Christ wholly for fear that we must also walk in Him in "that way" which is Himself and which He Himself walked. We learn the words without grasping "the truth." We speak of "the truth" but do not walk in "the truth." We desire as a consolation to have Christ upon the tongue but not in the heart as our "life." Is this Christianity? Far from it! Thus we do not come to the Father; in that manner we cannot enter into life. For we do not have "the way, the truth, and the life." We do not stand and walk in Jesus; we have not life in us, but only upon our tongue and in our imagination. An imagined journey, an unentered way, do not lead us to the destination. If Christ be your "way," then walk in Him; otherwise you cannot get any farther with Him. If Christ be your "truth," then let it set you free from sin (John 8: 32. 36), for it can do it; it will and must do it; otherwise you will not be free, you will not come to the Father. If Christ be your "life," where then, does He live? In you? Do you live with Him? If not, then you are dead, even though you live; you will never see the Father. Lay hold on eternal life, and walk in the way of truth, that through the Son you may come to the Father.

Dwelling in His presence holy,
I at length shall reach the place
Where with all His saints in glory
I shall see His lovely face;
Nothing then but bliss forever:
I will leave my Jesus never.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed. 1 Chron. 22: 13. For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications, when I cried unto thee. Ps. 31: 22. Attend unto me, and hear me: I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise. Ps. 55: 2.

"Dread," if you cannot do otherwise, but "be not dismayed." The prophets dreaded and lamented, as we see from the above cited verses; but they also rejoiced. The apostles were troubled on every side, yet not distressed (2 Cor. 4: 8). Our Savior "began to be sorrowful and very heavy," but He conquered His dread and went out to meet His murderers with undaunted courage (Mat. 26: 37; John 18: 4). The Gentiles, the unbelievers, who are without God, despair, but not so the Christians. It may be that they must bear "the terrors" of God and be "cut off" (Ps. 88: 16); but the Lord comforts them when they are weary, that they be not "dismayed" (Sir. 17: 20). But they who let their hope and confidence fall or throw faith away entirely and no longer believe what God has promised in His Word and consequently fall away from God, who succumb in the spiritual battle, flee and leave the field to the enemy, these shall have "their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21: 8). A Christian must therefore, never permit himself to be taken captive by dejection and despondency, however dark the outlook may be. He may lament with David; he may weep and complain to God as Jeremiah; only he must not give up hope; help will surely come if he be not "dismayed," if he cease not in prayer and supplication, hope and expectation. It has often seemed to the dearest children of God as if He had cast them off, as if His mercy were never to return, as if no help were to come. Even for them the Lord stayed the help so long that they came near losing perseverance. Nevertheless, at length the help came, and the comfort, and the power, and God gave them so much greater joy. Let the cause of your

dread be whatever it may, afflictions, misfortune, persecution, or temptations, or the weakness of the flesh, which you so much desire to overcome, without ever being able to overcome it,—despair not; wait and hope until help comes. It will surely come, even though you must struggle and wait to the end. If you give yourself up to despair, you know even now where you belong: you are certainly lost. But as long as you wait, there is hope of rescue, and salvation is possible.

Correct, reprove, and comfort me;
As I have need, my Savior be;
And if I would from Thee depart,
Then clasp me, Savior, to Thy heart.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. 1 John 2: 28. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. 1 John 3: 24; 4: 13. Neither shall evil dwell with thee. Ps. 5: 4. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. 2 John 9.

All is not done by coming to Jesus and being in Jesus: only he who "abides" in Him to the end shall be saved. When some persons have tasted of the presence of Jesus, they consider themselves saved forever. They become secure and proud, yea, at last lukewarm and cold, and instead of abiding in Jesus, they abide in an imaginary and false appropriation of His grace and righteousness, or in the empty glory that they have once possessed and known Jesus. "Abide," says John, "abide in Him." Incessantly you must be partakers of Him; every day perceive Him in your hearts and have Him near; you must daily arouse and renew faith in Him, love to Him, communion with Him, and ever seek to preserve this living union with Jesus. To this end is needed the prayer without ceasing, which Jesus and St. Paul so highly recommend. All who have re-

mained in Jesus, have also been faithful and enduring in prayer. Alas! a soul is soon awakened and rejoices in the coming of Jesus into the heart; but he does not hold Him fast, does not abide in Him. He has found the treasure, but does not preserve it. He will not sacrifice everything to possess it. He desires to retain Jesus and also the world together with Him. He desires to enjoy sensual joys, possessions and honor, besides Jesus; desires to be in Christ and at the same time in self. But that is impossible. If you remain in yourself and in your old conversation, Jesus can not remain in you. You must depart from your own self, deny yourself completely, and nail the old Adam to the cross. Otherwise you cannot be a disciple of Jesus, nor "abide" in Him.

Be Thou my Strength, be Thou my Way,
Protect me through my life's short day:
In all my acts let wisdom guide,
And keep me, Savior, near Thy side.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle. Job 29: 2-4. We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. Is. 59: 9. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Is. 9: 2.

The ways in which the Lord leads His own are often very dark; they can hardly see a step ahead, not knowing where to place the foot. On all sides the soul is wrapped in the blackness of night; no star shines; the sun and the moon are gone down. The road is rough, stony and dangerous. Then we think with Job of the months and years gone by with their beautiful and glorious illumination when we walked as in broad daylight, in the rays from the sun of righteousness. Even in the darkness we had sufficient light to walk securely and cheerfully. Job had to pass through this night, and

the Lord helped him through it. The God of Job is also your God; only surrender yourself to Him. If you do not see anything, yet hold fast in faith His hidden hand. His hand holds you though you do not see it; it does not relinquish its hold upon you. Though you say with Isaiah, "We wait for light and behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind" (Is. 59: 9. 10). Instead of being gladdened by the expected light, ever more darkness breaks in. Yet, fear not! For "the people that walk in darkness see a great light," if they wait for the light in faith. The Lord is the same yesterday and to-day; yea, He is forever the same. As He was in the youth of my faith, "when His secret was upon my tabernacle," even such is He to-day, even though darkness now cover my tabernacle. He never changes. He remains love, faithfulness and truth, by night as by day, in storm as well as in still, clear and sunny weather. Do not change your faith and trust. He changes not.

From all my griefs and straits, O Lord!
Thy mercy sets me free;
Whilst in the confidence of prayer
My heart takes hold on Thee.

MONDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound. Is. 30: 26. **If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.** 2 Cor. 3: 9.

They had light even in the old dispensation; for Messiah, Jesus, has shined in all centuries. But this was only the dawn, the first blush of day. But in the new dispensation, the sun shines in midday splendor. Since the time when He was born of a woman, hung upon the cross, arose from the dead; since we know that He sits at the right hand of God, and baptizes with

fire and with the Spirit, it is far different. We see on the cross infinitely more than the Israelites saw in the brazen serpent. True, God spoke also in the past with man, but only through His servants. Now He speaks with us by His Son. That appeals more to the heart; for His sermon of the cross is the most glorious one could wish in this sinful world. When the crucified Son cries to heaven, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory); when the Risen One shows us His wounds and says, "Peace be unto you, receive the Holy Spirit," it is something far greater than when Moses says, "Cursed be he that shall not keep all the words of this law." From the words of Jesus beams the clearest and happiest light into our hearts; for it brings with it grace, peace, righteousness and joy, while on the other hand the lantern of Moses only seeks out the trespasses and the iniquities, and illumines judgment and hell to frighten us, for our good, however, that we may thereby be driven to the cross. Therefore, we give thanks for both. Let us remain at the cross of Christ until we shall see Him as He is. What a glorious day that will be!

O gladly tread the narrow path,
While light and grace are given!
For those who follow Christ on earth,
Shall reign with Him in heaven.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Ps. 46: 11. If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Rom. 8: 31. 33.

He who abides in God stands fast and secure, firm as the rock in the sea: the billows shall not shake or remove it. The "elect" whom the Lord has chosen out of the world and upon whom He has put the seal of the Holy Spirit, so that they are His own—who because of

the testimony of God's Spirit know that they are His children because they are led by His Spirit and because His Spirit bears witness with their spirit of their sonship, these elect, who have surrendered themselves unconditionally to the Lord to live and die for Him, are invincible. God preserves them as the apple of His eye. Neither the world nor the devil can lay anything to their charge; for God takes care of them, God defends them and shields them. Who shall appear against God? They fear no one. Who shall be able to touch those whom God covers and protects? That it lies in the heart of God to be their confidence, their rock, their refuge and fortress, we know for a certainty from the fact that He spared not His own Son, but sacrificed Him for them. He who knows this, to whom, in the light of God, it has become clear and in whose heart it is written, "God has for *your* sake not spared His own Son, but has given Him for you," can no longer waver in his trust in God. He thinks, What more do I want? I have already received so much from my God that I cannot receive more. How am I to receive and enjoy all that I already possess? The Son of God is mine! Expand thyself, O mine heart! How canst thou make room for this gift? Now, he who rightly understands how to hold fast this gift, entertains no fear of not receiving everything else of which he is in need; yea, he finds and possesses in this gift everything else. Only he must see to it that he actually possesses Christ and that he not only imagines having part in Him. He that has the Son has also the Father for himself and in himself. He can say with St. Paul, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8: 38. 39).

A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He helps us free from every need
That hath us now o'ertaken.

The old, bitter foe
Means us deadly woe:
Deep guile and great might
Are his dread arms in fight,
On earth is not his equal.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Rom. 10: 10. If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Heb. 10: 26. 27.

There are many who boldly believe and appropriate the righteousness of Christ. Nevertheless, they believe not with the heart, but with the mouth only. It is with the heart man believes; the faith of the heart makes righteous, makes the heart righteous, makes life, mind and conversation righteous. With the mouth we make confession, and that saves, if the heart and the mouth agree. If, on the other hand, your mouth confess and appropriate the righteousness of Christ, but your heart love unrighteousness, you make a wrong calculation. God will draw a line through your profession and say, "I never knew you; depart from me you who work iniquity." When such a dead faith appropriates the merit of Christ, it will earn for itself hell and the wrath of God. For he who says that he believes in Christ and is justified by Him and yet voluntarily and without fear lives in the lust and love of the world, allows himself to be governed by his passions and gives himself up to anger, licentiousness, craving for honor, envy, hatred, covetousness, sinful amusements, dissipation, worldly joys, drunkenness or intemperance of any kind whatsoever, may read his sentence in Heb. 10: 28. 29. Abraham believed, and "it was counted unto him for righteousness," because his faith was obedient to God. You believe and are disobedient, and you count it unto yourself for righteousness; but God will count it unto

unrighteousness. For he to whom He imputes righteousness, also possesses it; he is righteous even as God is righteous; as John says, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous" (1 John 3: 7).

Finish then Thy new creation,
Pure, unspotted, may we be;
Let us see Thy great salvation
Perfectly restored in Thee!
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? John 3: 10. For some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame. 1 Cor. 15: 34. I know whom I have believed. 2 Tim. 1: 12. I know that my Redeemer liveth. Job 19: 25.

"If thou hadst known the things which belong unto thy peace!" said Jesus in tears before Jerusalem. The same could be said of many who call themselves Christians, yea, who confess that they belong to those who are awakened. For notwithstanding all their talk about these things, they do not know their own true condition. There is no divine assurance, no knowledge of personal experience, in them, no knowledge in the heart (if one may speak thus), but only a knowledge in the head, a knowledge of the memory, something memorized, heard, and repeated after others. They have either not tasted, or they have tasted too little, of the goodness of the Lord. They have the words in the mouth, but not the truth, the essence of the words, not the power of truth in their hearts. Accordingly, there is much talk about regeneration, repentance, and awakening, but there are few who are regenerated, converted, and awakened. There are many who have a great many things to say concerning regeneration, but they are ignorant of their own regeneration and spiritual renewing.

Hence they actually understand just as little about it as Nicodemus did. St. Paul complained of some of his Corinthians who could talk, judge and condemn, give rise to divisions, and who knew much; but they were ignorant of that which they ought to know. "Ye have not the knowledge of God," says St. Paul; that is, they had no living, active knowledge, did not know the truth from experience. The heart knew nothing of Jesus. St. Paul had a living information and knowledge of Him in whom he believed. Job knew that his Redeemer lives, that is, he had experience of the power of the living God in his own heart. It has been the same with all true Christians. They have known what one ought to know; they have possessed what they knew; perceived in their own lives that which they believed, and they have borne within themselves Christ in whom they have believed. They have lived in Christ, and Christ in them.

Grant that Thy Word and doctrines good
May in our hearts be cherished,
And that we may, on this sound food,
Be to salvation nourished;
Yea, let us die to every sin,
Revive the heavenly life within,
That we may bear faith's fruitage.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For I know him, and that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. Gen. 18: 19. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Col. 3: 21.

God promised Abraham that all nations should be blessed in him. Why did God give the patriarch this promise? The blessed Lord tells you Himself: God foresaw that Abraham would teach his children and his household "the way of the Lord," and lead them in it. The faith that did such works, was the justifying faith of Abraham. Thus did he show his faith, and this active faith was counted him unto righteousness. You also believe; but what do you do for your children and

your household? God knows whether you teach them the way of the Lord and whether you guide them therein by your example. God does not consider the faith that you speak of with your mouth, but the faith that manifests itself in your life and conversation and in the training of your children. Your faith can not save you if you permit your children to be damned. You do not walk in "the way of the Lord," in the way of saving faith, if you do not also lead your children and subordinates in the right way. If you have formerly, while you walked in the evil and perverted ways, neglected it, and if you are not now able to bring your children, misguided by yourself, back into the right way, notwithstanding all the zeal and care you employ, do not cease to admonish and to warn them; do not become weary in watchfulness and prayers to the Lord. Despair not; for He who has saved you will also save your children, if you do not neglect your part. It were better that they were not born, than that they should be lost. Could you wish to be saved without your children? But you must not provoke them to anger by endeavoring to force salvation upon them. This is something which you cannot accomplish by force. You may hinder it thereby; by such procedure you may easily plunge them deeper into depravity. Train and guide them as God has guided you. Do to them what God has done to you. Have patience; not a patience like that of Eli, but the patience of earnest love, the patience of God, which desires to lead all men to repentance. (The same applies to children who have unconverted and unbelieving parents).

O blessed house, where little children, tender,
Are laid upon thy heart, with hands of prayer,
Thou Friend of children, Who will freely render
To them more than a mother's loving care;
Where round Thy feet they gather, to Thee clinging,
And hear Thy loving voice most willingly,
And in their songs Thy hearty praises ringing,
Rejoice in Thee, O blessed Lord, in Thee.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 1 John 2: 15. 16. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. Mat. 26: 41.

"Are ye still asleep?" said the Savior to His disciples when He came back from His first prayer on the Mount of Olives and found them heavy with sleep, against which He had warned them so emphatically. He foresaw the danger and knew their weakness; therefore He admonished them to watch and pray. But they all slept away from prayer and watching and fell most shamefully. Are you still asleep, O child of man, notwithstanding that you have three arch-enemies in you and around you? In you you have the world; but in the world there are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These are three mighty enemies, which it is impossible for you to overcome, if you do not seek reinforcement from above, and if you are not always on your guard. He who does not watch, who is slothful in the practice of his Christianity, gives weapons in the hands of these enemies, delivers to his adversary provisions and reinforcements so that he can maintain his fortress and become invincible. You have the enemy, the thief, in the house, and yet you sleep quietly as if there were no danger at hand. How much easier you make for him the victory and the pillage! It is easy for us to fall: we are born as fallen beings. We bring with us from our parents the inclination to fall; we cannot learn to stand fast and pursue a steady aim without grace and the daily renewing of the inner man, which must be wrought from above by the Holy Spirit. He who does not each day pray God for this Spirit of power, and who does not watch in this Spirit, lies asleep in the bosom of the enemy. What a terrible awakening, when at last he is awakened by the fall into the bottomless pit!

Let us watch, then pray with heed,
God will prove our Hearer;
For the hour of utmost need
Constantly draws nearer.
Saints will cheer,
Sinners fear,
When the trumpet calleth,
Earth in ruins falleth.

THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. 1 Thes. 5: 23. 24.

It is a sanctification perfect and complete, a sanctification of the whole man, of spirit, soul and body, that the apostle demands. A blamelessness unto the day of Christ, unto the coming of the Lord, must adorn the conversation of the Christian; otherwise he cannot stand at His coming. But there are many dangers in this world, much of depravity in ourselves, and it is impossible for us in our own strength to press through and reach this sanctification and blamelessness. Therefore the apostle points out the true fountain and the right way that leads to it. He says that the "God of peace" shall sanctify us; and this He is willing to do. For this purpose He bestows upon us in rich measure His Holy Spirit, who can make and preserve "spirit and soul and body" holy and undefiled, not only outwardly, superficially, in the manner of the Pharisees, but in our very being. The way that leads to such sanctification is believing prayer and active piety together with confidence in the faithfulness of the Lord that He will surely help and strengthen us when we do not hinder Him, but each day, pursuing holiness, surrender ourselves to Him. In him whom He has called, and in whom He has begun His precious work, will He also perform it. Whom God has justified, him will He also sanctify and glorify so that he becomes like to the image of His Son. But

nothing is here so much in God's way as our little faith, our distrust and fear that our sanctification is something impossible. Such thoughts paralyze us; close the door of our hearts to grace; vex the Holy Spirit and work that we ultimately lose all grace. For he who does not desire to become perfectly pure and holy, is not fit for the kingdom of God. Semi-saints, superficially sanctified persons, are of no use in heaven. "Wholly" sanctified or not at all. Think of this! God is faithful. He, *He*—mark it!—shall do it. Your weak faith will not hinder Him.

Make me to walk in Thy commands;
'Tis a delightful road;
Nor let my head, or heart, or hands,
Offend against my God.

MONDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Ps. 126: 5. 6. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Rev. 7: 13. 14.

Without a sowing in tears, no harvest of joy. Without great tribulations, no great gladness. Without the cross, no crown. Without the battle, no victory. Without labor, no birth. Not as though we were to merit salvation by suffering, cross and battle. By no means. Ask the apostle Paul, who can tell you a great deal about this, and you shall hear that, even though we are justified and saved by grace without the merit of works, we nevertheless can not enter into the kingdom of heaven without tribulation, persecutions and great afflictions. Read through all the Scriptures and you shall find both. Do not put asunder that which is inseparable. Your faith in the righteousness of Christ is of no account unless it has been tried seven times in the crucible of

tribulation, as the gold is tried in the fire. Who knows that you love the Savior as long as you do not suffer for Him and only desire to walk to heaven upon roses? Ask all true Christians through the centuries if they have not suffered much and sowed "in tears" before they could "reap in joy." St. John the seer, who saw much farther than you and I can see, relates that beyond, where the Lamb and His company walk in white robes with palms and crowns, they have nothing else to say but that all who *there* are robed in white, *here* were badly burned by the heat of tribulation—that all who there have entered into glory, *here* did not walk on roses, but had to enter the joy of the Lord through thorns and upon stony paths, through fire and sword, ridicule and dishonor. If you walk in these ways, you shall be saved by grace and in heaven cast down your crown before the Lamb.

In that peace we reap in gladness
What was sown in tearful showers;
There the fruit of all our sadness
Ripens,—there the palm is ours;
There our God upon His throne
Is our full reward alone.
They who lived, who died unto Him,
Sheaves of gladness bring there through Him.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Job 14: 14. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. Ps. 42: 11.

The Christian's life consists in giving himself, soul and body, to God, and in waiting for the perfect change, the complete deliverance from all evil, sin, and suffering; in short, all that darkens the horizon of his soul. This waiting and hoping sometimes becomes too hard for us, and we have to enter upon a warfare against ourselves. We desire it differently. The Christian longs for the great change; he longs to be translated from

temporal things to eternal things; from strife into rest. But when the battle waxes hot, the Christian conducts himself as the brave soldiers who, notwithstanding they have a superior enemy opposing them, do not run away nor allow themselves to be taken captive, but defend themselves manfully in the sure hope that the commander-in-chief in due time will send auxiliary troops and reinforcements. Who has a better right to hope for reinforcements than the Christian, whose Commander-in-chief Himself has fought here on earth and watches the battle that each of His soldiers must fight, who is, though unseen, Himself ever present in the fray? Besides this consolation, the Christian constantly looks forward to the crown of glory which shall fall to his lot if he remain steadfast until the end. He thinks, At present I must suffer, but sometime, *sometime,* I shall thank God and give praise especially for that which now causes me the greatest distress and sorrow. Yea, my afflictions shall become my greatest joy. He who now hides His face from me, shall yet become the health of my countenance, and my God. I shall behold Him, possess and enjoy Him; this is surely worth fighting for.

Jesus, still lead on,
Till our rest be won;
Heavenly Leader, still direct us,
Still support, console, protect us,
Till we safely stand
In our Fatherland!

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. Eph. 2: 18. 19.

He who has "put on Christ" and truly lives in Christ, has his name written in heaven. No one, except the hand of man himself, can erase the name; but he himself can blot it out, if he again stretch forth his hand for the world and sin, and draw it away from Christ. But he who abides in Christ, has most assuredly a place in

heaven which no one can take from him. Will not he who is convinced of this rejoice because of his right as a citizen of heaven? will he not raise himself above earthly things? will not his heart be more in heaven than on earth? A Christian is no stranger and foreigner in heaven, in the kingdom of God, in the invisible world. His spirit is already at home there. He knows his home-country well and the way that leads to it. He who is not at home there but conducts himself as if he were a foreigner who, like a guest, seldom comes there and only by great effort can turn his thoughts in that direction, can hardly belong to the true household of God and be a fellow-citizen with the saints. It is, perhaps, only something he imagines, something which he has heard and which he repeats. They of the household know the house whether it be large or small. The household of God—should they not know the house and the kingdom of God? Should they not be strangers here? Should they not be at home there? Beloved, by your conversation in the spirit you may know of what kingdom you are a citizen, whether you are a citizen of the world or a citizen of heaven. The heart of the citizen of this world clings to the world and dwells in the world; the spirit of the citizen of heaven dwells in heaven and clings to its home.

If the way be drear,
If the foe be near,
Let not faithless fear o'ertake us,
Let not faith and hope forsake us;
For through many a foe
To our home we go.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Rom. 12: 2. This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind. Eph. 4: 17.

There is nothing more self-contradictory, nothing more shameful, than when a person glories in Christ crucified, in His merits and grace, and at the same time loves the world—that world which has crucified and which daily crucifies the Lord. There is nothing so shameful as a Christian who conforms himself to the world and acts contrary to the mind of the crucified One; who yearns for honor and is offended and feels hurt to such an extent by every slight and disrespect for his person that he feels wretched and plans revenge or self-exaltation; who seeks earthly riches which Jesus disdained; who loves the carnal lusts, ease and an idle life, while Jesus suffered so much in this world in order to save us; who still nourishes hatred, enmity, ill-will, malice, in his heart, and shows this in his conduct toward his enemies, while Jesus prayed for His enemies and murderers, kissed the one who betrayed Him and commands us to do the same; who will not be behind the world in anything but emulate it in all things so as not to make a sensation, so as not to be despised, but honored; who will not confess Jesus and His holy doctrine in word and conduct but feels ashamed to appear in all things a true and faithful disciple of Jesus. Does not such a Christian act like a heathen? Does he not act as he did when he knew not Christ? I pray and adjure you, beloved, that you desist from glorying in Christ if you will not cease to conform to the world, if you will not put off all Gentile manners. Do you fear the passing ridicule of the world more than the unalterable word of Jesus, "I never knew you"?

Ashamed of Jesus! Just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon:
'Tis midnight with my soul, till He,
Bright Morning Star, bids darkness flee.

Ashamed of Jesus, that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No; when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere His name.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh. Is. 49: 25. 26. **Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.** Is. 51: 7.

Do ye know "the mighty" one, the Goliath of hell, the tyrant, the robber and the "murderer from the beginning?" Do not fear him. On the other hand, do not jest with him. For it is not without significance that the Scriptures call him the tyrant, "the mighty" one. All Israel trembled before Goliath. Only David dared enter into combat with him, and he conquered him with a smooth stone because he did not trust in Saul's armor, nor in his own arm, nor in the stone, but in the Lord who is the stronger. The Christian has nothing to fear when he is in Christ; for Christ is given unto us by God to deliver us from "the mighty" one, even though we are in his claws; to tear us from him even though we are the prey of hell. Much less should we fear men who often are kindled by hell and animated by Satan. Even though they rage ever so devilishly we commend the cause to the Lord in earnest prayer; He has promised to "contend" with them who contend with us, and to let them that oppress us "eat their own flesh," to capture them by their own snares and to let them fall into the pits they have dug for the children of God. How can we fear when the Lord cries to us from heaven, "Fear not the reproach of men; be not afraid of the revilings of those who, all together, before me are only as a drop of water"? Learn, dear soul, to look away from men who are down here on earth; learn to turn your ears away from their reproaches and to look upward; listen to Him who looks down from on high and utters His "Fear not" to your soul. Do not forget these two little words; they are a shield by which you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of Satan.

Take, my soul, thy full salvation;
Rise o'er sin, and fear, and care;
Joy to find in every station,
Something still to do and bear:
Think what Spirit dwells within thee!
What a Father's smile is thine!
What a Savior died to win thee!
Child of heaven, shouldst thou repine?

SATURDAY AFTER THE SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts. Is. 65: 2. They do alway err in their heart. Heb. 3: 10. O that thou hadst harkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea. Is. 48: 18. O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Hos. 6: 4.

If the Savior "spread out His hands to a rebellious people," who ever offended Him but could not make Him weary; if He spread out His hands and held His arms open to them all the day, all the days of their life, what will He not do for them who spread out their hands to Him? whose whole longing and desire are bent on Him? who say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee"? If God loved the stiffnecked Jews so much, how much will He not love the Christians who have given themselves to Him completely? If He longed for those who walked after their own thoughts in ways that were not good, how earnestly will He not long for those whose thoughts are bent upon Him, who walk in the blessed way of faith and love! If the Lord did so much for Ephraim and Judah, concerning whom He makes so many complaints in the same chapter, how much will He not do for you, dear soul, if you bring Him your heart as a sacrifice and throw yourself into His arms with all that you are and all that you have! What rivers of divine peace will not flow into your soul that thirsts for Him! What a sea of grace and righteousness, of joy and salvation, will not pour into your heart, if

you heed His commandment, "Love me with all thy heart," "Abide in me," "Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden!" When you look up to God, never imagine Him otherwise than He presents Himself in the above quoted Scripture passages. Never picture Him to your spiritual eye otherwise than with arms spread out to you, with an open heart from which rivers of peace, grace and righteousness flow and would enter your heart. Make no other picture of Him. Copy the original that He has outlined for you, then you will get a good likeness of Him.

Sinner, come, for here is found
Balm that flows for every wound;
Peace that ever shall endure;
Rest eternal, sacred, sure.

THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy. Ps. 137: 5. 6. When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches. Ps. 63: 6.

What, ye children of Israel, ye could not in the strange land forget your Jerusalem, your temple, your outward sanctuary, which were but a shadow of the blessings that were to come? Jerusalem was your highest joy. Your heart clung to the place where the Lord of glory revealed Himself in clouds and in flames of fire. Ye would rather not live, nor think, nor talk, than forget Jerusalem, than not to be able to talk about it. So intensely can men love the outward sanctuary. And you, the children of the new covenant, who everywhere carry Jerusalem, your temple, your sanctuary, your ark of the covenant, the glory and the presence of the Lord, with you, you should cling less to it? You should be able to rejoice in anything else, to think of anything else in heaven or upon earth but of Him who dwells and moves in us, who is the heart of your heart and the life of your life? Should not He be your highest joy, your last thought in the evening and your first

thought in the morning? Should our tongue be able to speak of anything else? Should it not cling to the roof of our mouth if it rather talk of anything but of Him? Should not our soul, our heart, our mind and all our faculties, cling to Him who hung upon the cross and poured Himself out as water for us? Should a Jew be able to love his glory in stone more than we Christians love the living God? Should the law, which only proclaimed condemnation and death, which only wrought punishment, have greater power over the hearts of the Jews than the Gospel which imparts life and salvation, which works peace, over the hearts of the Christians? Should Moses make a deeper impression than the Savior with His wounds and the unction of His Spirit? Arise, brethren, arise! Let us love Him, for He loved us first. The Jews in Babylon must shame us and arise against us in judgment if we do not love God with our whole soul, if we do not constantly and in a heartfelt manner think of Him who has loved us even when we were enemies, who in pure grace and love has drawn us unto Himself and who desires to be forever all to our souls.

Thou heavenly Brightness, Light divine!
O deep within my heart now shine,
And make Thee there an altar!
Fill me with strength and joy to be
Thy member, ever joined to Thee
In love that cannot falter;
Towards Thee longing
Doth possess me; turn and bless me;
For Thy gladness
Eye and heart here pine in sadness.

MONDAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Turn ye unto him from whom the children of Israel have deeply revolted. Is. 31: 6. **For I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever.** Jer. 3: 12. **Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you.** Zech. 1: 3. **As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.** Ezek 33: 11. **Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.** Luke 15: 7.

Satan says to you, unfaithful and fallen brother, "God cares no longer for you; the children of God will no longer recognize you." But God says, "Turn, turn unto me; I will help you; I will redeem you." Do you prefer to believe the "liar" and the enemy of your soul instead of that Truth and Love which would rather see you redeemed and saved than lost and condemned? God your Savior does not only care for you, but there is also great rejoicing in heaven. "My angels," says Jesus, "rejoice as much and more over you than over ninety and nine who are not fallen away but have remained faithful after their conversion." "But my sin is too gross; I have so often forsaken my Savior." The greater will be His joy and the joy of His angels when they find that which was lost, when at last you turn to Him in such true repentance that nothing can separate you from Him any more. He will this time grant you all the more grace, that you may remain steadfast, and that He may not again lose His sheep which was lost and is found. That which keeps the fallen sinner from repentance, usually also keeps the pious from again seeking the face of the Lord and returning to communion with Him when he has stepped aside from the narrow way and forgotten himself. "As I am now, with such a distracted and unfaithful heart, I dare not come unto Him," he thinks; "I must wait until I become better." My friend, the same liar and murderer inspires this thought that deceives the fallen and keeps him from true repentance. For the Savior always says, "Come unto me, all." The longer you remain away, the worse you grow. The Savior is not willing that any one shall be lost but that all should return to Him; thus He writes to you in 2 Pet. 3: 9, "Return unto me thou who hast turned away, thou who art scattered, and I shall gather thee and keep thee out of thy distraction. I shall return unto thee." Thus He speaks to you in Is. 44: 22 and in Zech. 1: 3. May you read what the Lord here writes to you.

Jesus sinners doth receive!
What though Satan's rage assail me?
I of him ask no reprieve,

This assurance will avail me;
I am safe while I believe;
Jesus sinners doth receive.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Col. 1: 12-14. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. Ps. 116: 12. 13; 103: 1-4.

A grateful soul finds joy in recounting in his mind all the benefits and blessings which he has received from God during the days of his life. He forgets not the benefits of the Lord; for heartfelt thanks is a new and audible prayer. He who has received the forgiveness of his sin, should never forget the purging from his former sins that he may not fall into new ones. He who has become a child of God and has been sealed by His Spirit, must not vex that Spirit by ingratitude and heedlessness, but every day rejoice in it with a thankfulness which is heartfelt and humble. Then his state of grace will become ever better secured. He who dares call God Father and who has learned to know Jesus as Advocate and Redeemer, must not neglect, with earnest thankfulness and praise to his Savior, in a child-like manner to call upon the Father and pray Him for the preservation of grace through the Mediator, Jesus, that he may not lose His grace. Verily, he who always honestly rejoices in the love and mercy, favor and grace, of his merciful God and Savior, and with a sincere heart gives thanks therefor, and ever anew places this undeserved grace before his eyes, and meditates upon it in his heart, lives therein, and nothing shall separate him from "the love of God in Christ Jesus."

Oh, may this bounteous God,
Through all our life be near us,

With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in His grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills,
In this world and the next.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. 4: 7. 8.

In order to attain "godliness" you must be in God and God in you. Love is certainly God-like, for it abides in God and God abides in it. Therefore, love God with all your heart and you shall at once experience what it means to be godly. Seek His grace and the forgiveness of your sins through your Savior. Or, if you have already received this great benefit, remain in Him who has forgiven you and delight yourself in Him, and you shall be unspeakably blessed and enjoy a gladness and a peace which no man can take from you. That which serves to maintain and increase this joy is something in which you must exercise yourself. What should make you more godly than the child-like communion with Him in the spirit and a life active in love to your neighbor? God, Christ, is godliness itself, the fountain of all godliness. He who with all his heart keeps himself near this fountain, always exercises himself in drawing near to this fountain, who thirsts and longs for it, shall receive abundantly to drink from it; he shall be satisfied with the fatness of the house of God (Ps. 36: 8). In addition to this, every one who, feeling his blessedness in God, tries to make others partakers in this joy also, and to lead them to this fountain, becomes all the more blessed, in that the joy of others becomes his own joy and adds to his joy. Thus godliness has the promise that both here and hereafter it shall bring a gain so great that no benefit or good fortune on earth can bring anything like it. Godliness is blessed, ever blessed, in

life and in death, in this world and in the world to come. For nothing can separate it from God, its origin and source.

Love in loving finds employ,
In obedience all her joy;
Ever new that joy will be,
Loving Him who first loved me.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Jer. 22: 29. This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me. Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction. Ps. 119: 50. 92.

Hear how the prophets cry throughout the land to awaken love and attention to the Word of the Lord. Is the Word of God a matter of such great importance? Yes, most certainly, more than the tongue of any prophet can utter. If we had not the Word of God, we should perish in our affliction; thus David tells us. How often we come near to the pit of despair before we are able to grasp the Word of God and in faith and confidence hold fast the truthfulness and faithfulness of God! The Word of God alone can deliver us out of all things. Though we were in the jaws of hell, in the claws of Satan, in the nets of sin, if we are able to reach and grasp in faith the Word of the eternal, almighty God and our Savior, then death, devil and hell, sin and the world, and all the hosts of our enemies, must give us up, let us go and set us at liberty. The snare of the fowler is torn asunder; then we are free. The Word of the Lord is like a rope let down from heaven to the earth, which every human hand, every heart that will only believe, may grasp and hold fast. Every one who actually grasps it and does not let go of it even though the whole world try to hinder him or revile him, or use force in order to turn him away, is saved; he raises himself by its help above all mountains and is drawn out of every abyss and into heaven. For the Hand that lets down the rope also draws it up; that

Hand does not let go, and it does not let you fall. Fear not; the rope will not break. It is strong and good and holds forever; it is three-stranded. The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost hold it, and "a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Eccl. 4: 12).

Praised be the Lord, my God,
My Trust, my life from heaven,
The Father's Spirit, whom
The Son to me hath given,
He who revives my heart
And gives new strength and power,
Aid, comfort and support
In sorrow's gloomy hour.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life. 1 Tim. 6: 12. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. 2 Tim. 2: 5.

Who will deny the existence of those enemies that on all sides oppose the godly person and would rob him of his prize? If he desires to maintain it, he must fight, yet not with the fist, not with sword and rapier; not with a human arm, but with the shield of faith and the sword of God's Word, with prayer and supplication to Him by whom and with whom and in whom alone he is able to overcome his enemies. He who fights in his own strength against the enemies of his soul; he who builds fortifications of all kinds of human self-invented means, and thinks himself safe in them, will not be able to conquer in the fight. The enemies ridicule his fortifications. On the other hand, where they see the Lord, who is the strong hero in fight, they retreat and take to flight. Do you tremble before your enemies when you consider your own weakness and their strength? Engage not in battle with them with your own forces, but fall on your face before Him at whose name hell trembles; pray Him to fight for you and teach your hands to battle. Trust in Him; He shall do it and conduct the battle to victory. Do not trust in yourself, in your own intentions or weapons but solely and only in

Him. Continue therefore in prayer and in a living faith in Christ until the victory is won. This is the battle of faith and of constant prayer which the apostle Paul commends. Thus you lay hold of Christ, the eternal life. He who fights, but not thus, does not fight lawfully; he will not be crowned because he conquers not, nor can he conquer.

Fear not, O little flock, the foe
Who madly seeks your overthrow;
Dread not his rage and power:
What though your courage sometimes faints,
His seeming triumph o'er God's saints
Lasts but a little hour.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue — knowledge — temperance — patience — godliness — brotherly kindness — charity. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. 2 Pet. 1: 5-10.

There are some so-called awakened persons who have a little Bible in which is found nothing but that which serves to reassure and console their slothful flesh; that is, they take only a few comforting passages out of the Bible, that do not concern them at all, because they will have nothing to do with the rest of God's Word. The Bible becomes to them a fence by which they are enclosed so that they cannot get by their own flesh and blood to Christ. The Bible ought, however, to be a spur, each day driving them closer to Christ. Such a spur is also this passage in the epistle of St. Peter. It must be read as a whole and earnestly considered. He has first mentioned the most glorious promises of God; then follow these wholesome exhortations that no one must regard as superfluous even though he may have been with St. Peter on Mount Tabor or with St. Paul in Paradise. You may already have received many evidences of grace from God. Thank God for them. But if you do not use diligence in making your election and your calling to true Christianity sure; if you

do not strive together with your "I believe in God the Father, I believe in Jesus our Savior" to unite Christian virtue, true godliness, patience and temperance and all that which the eye of Jesus desires to see in you and which He expects to see in His disciples, then hear what St. Peter has to say to you: you are blind, you close your eyes, and you have forgotten the purging from your former sins. You will fall or you are already fallen, because you have forgotten the true imitation of Christ and the likeness to Him. On the other hand, if you possess all those things which St. Peter requires, and if you are not idle and barren in the knowledge of Jesus, you are a true disciple of Jesus and know how the Bible is to be used. Nowadays, however, most people like the Bible in pocket size. Still even in such a Bible there is enough to wound and heal if they only would suffer themselves to be wounded and healed.

Lord, make us ready with Thy powers,
Strengthen the flesh in weaker hours,
That as good warriors we may force
Through life and death to Thee our course!

THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. John 4: 34. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Rom. 8: 29. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. John 13: 15.

How can a true Christian daily receive grace upon grace from Jesus, allow himself to be so undeservedly loved by him, live upon His merits, wash in His blood and draw life from His death, without feeling the wish, the earnest desire and endeavor to become like his Master and to be in this world as He was? Every disciple fashions himself according to his master, looks to his mouth and hand. Shall the Christian remain in his natural depravity, shall he be born of God and have Christ dwelling by faith in his heart and not lead a godly life as his Master, not seek to be fashioned like Him? No,

even a friend tries to imitate a friend in all things. The lover gives himself no rest until he has recalled the likeness of the beloved to his mind's eye. Love shows itself in that one acts as the one beloved. We, also, are predestined and elected by God "before the foundation of the world" to be like Him "in love" (Eph. 1: 4). His favorite food (John 4: 34) must also be ours. His mind and conduct must also be our mind and conduct; otherwise we have no part in Him. Our eye must always be turned toward Him and His holy conduct, so that we always think, speak and act as He would think, speak and act if He were in our place. As was said to Moses, "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount" (Ex. 25: 40; Acts 7: 44), so it is said also to the Christian: Look to that pattern which was showed thee on Mount Golgotha and plan thy whole life and conduct according thereto.

Let Thy rich grace increase,
Through all my early days,
The fruit of righteousness and peace
To Thine eternal praise.

MONDAY AFTER THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And the multitude of all the nations — — — shall be as a dream of a night vision. It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; — — — but he awaketh, and behold, he is faint. Is. 29: 7. 8. **Why sleep ye? rise and pray.** Luke 22: 46. **The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.** Ps. 14: 2. **The Lord is good unto them that wait for him.** Lam. 3: 25.

False Christians, the only seemingly awakened, who walk in drowsy security and feed upon words and nourish themselves by thoughts and fancies, are like those who dream. If they once become frightened out of their sleep, they see at last and feel how empty, lean, and spiritless they have been. Learn to know yourself. Prove yourself to learn if you eat in a dream or in a wakeful condition; if you feed upon living words or only on

mere dead letters. Living food nourishes and strengthens. Dream-food leaves the eater empty, powerless and as one dead. If you are such a secure and drowsy person who has been awakened, having the name of being wakeful, but yet sleep and only dream, then arise and hear the word of the Lord by which He awakened His drowsy disciples: look up to heaven. The Lord looks down from heaven to see if you are awake and seek Him. He is ready to answer you. He is good to all who earnestly inquire after deliverance and salvation. If your conscience is awakened, or if it sometime shall awake, then know that the Lord a long time has watched and waited for you; that He rejoices when you at last hunger for His salvation and long for the powerful food of the Word of Life. Despair not because of the time you have lost and dreamt away, but begin to-day to improve every moment; then salvation shall be yours.

Oh, yield Him all: in Him confide;
Where but with Him doth peace abide?
Break loose, let earthly bonds be riven,
And let the spirit rise to heaven!

TUESDAY AFTER THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. Gen. 24: 25. Come; for all things are now ready. — — — Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. — — — Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. Luke 14: 17-23.

As Rebekah and Laban so hospitably invited, received and lodged the servant of Abraham, there being enough room in their father's house, so hospitable and infinitely more hospitable is the Son of the eternal Father, in whose house there are as many mansions as there are men who desire to be saved. Should it ever be said of the vast habitation of God, when a poor, sinful, repentant child of man, longing for grace, knocks to be admitted and received: The house is full; there is no

more room? The Savior teaches us something different. Not alone for those who voluntarily announce themselves at the first invitation, is there room; but if all come who have been called and invited, yet there is room for those also who are compelled and constrained by the power of love. Though all respectable people are at the table, there is yet room for the maimed, the halt, and the blind, and those whom nobody else desires to have in the house. Even when all these are brought in, there is still room for those wretches who lie along the highways, the sight of whose misery pains the passersby; there is still room for those who lie behind the bushes and the hedges, who, as a rule, are not very fine and cultured people; yea, even for them there is room. The Lord desires by force and violence to have them at His table. He becomes angry if they do not come. He will consume them with fire if they do not accept His house and His table, as He destroyed those who allowed themselves to be kept from coming to His supper by their oxen and fields and wives. So earnestly does the Lord desire that all men should be saved. So many places are prepared in His house; there is so much room that none will be turned away: all are received. Therefore, do not fear that you will not be received; fear rather that you will not come; that you remain away through your own neglect, to the sorrow of Him who has called you.

God calling yet!—and shall He knock
And I my heart the closer lock?
He still is waiting to receive,
And shall I dare His Spirit grieve?

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. 1 John 5: 4. He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do. John 14: 12.

Faith is the way and the door and the key to all the treasures of God. "All things are possible to him

that believeth," says the Savior (Mark 9: 23). What the Savior did, faith can do; yea, faith can do even greater works, according to what the Lord has promised His believers. It is hard to believe this and yet, who shall dare gainsay the truth? For Jesus does not say that He Himself could not have done greater works, but only that He will let those who believe on Him do greater works. It is He alone who works in the believers and therefore the works are His works. The greatest work is unquestionably to overcome one's self and the world within one's self. For there have been world-conquerors who have conquered everything without. The Christian only can conquer self. That power is not to be found outside of the Christian. Still, the Christian faith conquers also in others and for others. When it struggles in prayer, it conquers the most invincible, the most hardened hearts, and makes them subject to Christ. It drives all devils of sin and wickedness out of the hearts of men, when in the power of prayer it raises itself to that Lord who has the keys of death and hell. What can be stronger than death? Who can overcome it? Faith does not fear it. Faith swallows it up, quickens the dead and creates a new, living world out of dry bones (Ezek. 3: 7). "If you can do nothing but believe, then you can do all things." Such faith is a living and moving power of prayer, and is most intimately connected with omnipotence—a connection without which faith is impossible. Faith is God in us. Blessed is he who holds Him fast.

Faith in the conscience worketh peace,
And bids the mourner's weeping cease;
By faith the children's place we claim,
And give all honor to one Name.

THURSDAY AFTER THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor un-circumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Gal. 5: 6. Circumcision is nothing, and un-circumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. 1 Cor. 7: 19. Thou hast faith, — — — shew me thy

faith without thy works. — — — But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? James 2: 18. 20.

Living faith plants Christ, the Tree of Life, in the heart; by faith the Tree is firmly grounded and rooted and bears fruit unto eternal life. Where there are no fruits, there is no good tree, no matter how much talk there is about it. Sooner will you be able to separate the light from the sun and the warmth from the fire, than you shall separate love and the works of love from true faith. Faith without works is a sun without light, a fire without heat. Of what use to you is a righteousness which leaves you without righteousness, without righteous works? Of what use to you is a Christ who lived, suffered and died nineteen hundred years ago, who allows you to remain destitute and dead in sin? Of what use to you is a garment which you do not wear on your body? If Christ by faith have bestowed upon you the robe of His righteousness, the bridal costume, then where is it? Show it; put it on; walk in it; otherwise you will not be admitted to the bridal supper; you will be cast out if you have entered the room. If God be ours, if Christ be ours, He must be in us. A God, a Christ, who is not in me, is not my God, not my Christ. That which is not blended together with my being is not mine, does not belong to me and I do not belong to it. I cannot count it mine when I do not appropriate it to myself, nor receive it into my mind, my heart, and my spirit. That which lives in me is my life. He who does not possess the Spirit of Christ is none of His. He who does not possess the righteousness of Christ, to him it does not belong. What do you gain if, when someone has given you a check for a large sum of money, you do not cash it and use the amount denoted on the check? When God gives you something, He gives it that you may enjoy and possess it. Examine yourselves, then, whether you possess that in which you believe, whether Christ is really to you that which God has intended Him to be to you (1 Cor. 1: 30).

Happy only in Thy love,
Poor, unfriended, or unknown,
Fix my thoughts on things above;
Stay my heart on Thee alone.

FRIDAY AFTER THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And he rose up that night, — — — and Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. Gen. 32: 22. 24-26.

The man who "wrestled" with Jacob was the Son of God, which Jacob later acknowledged when he received His blessing (v. 29. 30). It was a fierce struggle which you can not understand unless you have experienced it yourself. God often mightily opposes His heroes of faith. He wants them to overcome Him with might and main. This is certainly done for no other reason than to exercise us in faith in order that we may prize and carefully preserve that which we have gained. Without such a battle you will not get much from God. Nor must you overlook how Jacob prepared himself. He arose in the night when one can pray and commune undisturbed with God. He let his wives and children pass over the brook that he might be alone with God. To wrestle with God is a great act for which we should put everything else aside. Jacob did not discontinue the wrestling until God said to him, "Let me go, for the day breaketh," until God put the hollow of his thigh out of joint, until God blessed him, until Jacob had obtained that which he desired. Learn from this to pray and to wrestle in prayer, if you are in earnest about your salvation. The Savior more than once let others wrestle with Him (Mat. 15: 22). He Himself wrestled with death (Luke 22: 44). St. Paul wrestled through many afflictions in prayer by His power who wrought "mightily" in him (2 Tim. 4: 7; Col. 1: 29). He relates that Epaphras "labors fervently" in prayer for the Colossians (Col. 4: 12). He exhorts and beseeches the brethren that they, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, "strive together" with Him in prayer to God for him (Rom. 15: 30). Prayer, therefore, is not a

mumbling with the mouth, not a gift of eloquence, but a mighty battle with God in the spirit. Lord, teach us to pray and to wrestle with Thee as Thy friends have wrestled with Thee. Strengthen me, that I never let Thee go until Thou hast blessed me.

Strong in the Lord of hosts,
And in His might and power:
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

SATURDAY AFTER THE EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1: 15. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Mark 2: 17. God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Tim. 2: 4.

It is true, as St. Paul says, that there is no word more beautiful and comforting, though you search all libraries and books in the world, though you listen to the sayings of all wise men and fools, than this precious word, "worthy of all acceptation," that Christ Jesus, God's only begotten Son, "came into the world to save sinners." When this word falls upon open ears, it makes the whole man richer than if one bestowed upon him a thousand worlds, more blessed than if all the great and the small of earth assured him of their favor. What the apostle wrote the Savior had previously confirmed and cried to a world full of sinners: Yes, I am indeed come into this world to call sinners to repentance and salvation. Mark that I do not seek saints, not righteous men on earth. I know full well the world is full of sinners; but it is in their behalf that I am here, sent by the God of love, who is not willing that any human soul should perish, but desires, that all, *all* be saved. The world ought to fall on its face and worship. But since the world does not do so, may you, dear reader, come to the Savior. Let this word fully enter your heart and you shall surely bow in adoration.

When you understand this word rightly, it will cause you to bend your knees even though nothing else in the world is able to make you bow down. Blessed are the ears that are open to hear Thee, Thou Word of Life.

Who can tell the pleasure,
Who recount the treasure,
By Thy Word imparted
To the simple-hearted?

Oh, that we, discerning
Its most holy learning,
Lord, may love and fear Thee,
Evermore be near Thee.

THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

There is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Jer. 10: 6. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior. Is. 43: 11. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. Is. 25: 9.

Jesus is everything to us. He is altogether such a one as we sinful, weak and blind men are in need of. What He does for us, none else can do. The help, comfort, and grace; the life, peace and blessedness, which we find in Jesus, we seek in vain elsewhere. No man could find true peace and quiet for his soul; no man become pure and good; none stand before God in judgment; none entertain hope of a better life; none be saved; none comfort another; none expect any good for himself and those who are his, if Jesus were not the one He is, the Savior, the Redeemer, the one who blots out sin, the one who quickens the dead, our Light, our Truth, our Life, "whose name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Is. 9: 6). Where should the human flock find a shepherd who could see them all, find them all, feed, shield and protect them? Whence should come the sacrifice potent to blot out all sins and all guilt from Adam to the last one born of woman?

Where should that physician, that medicine, that fulness of Spirit, of power, of unction, be found, which is needed to heal all weakness, all vice, all the faults and diseases of the soul and make the whole man new? Where should that sea be discovered from which all human hearts, who need gladness and long for salvation, might draw and drink their fill? Who would have that patience, faithfulness, tenderness and love which is necessary to the awakening, conversion, enlightenment and sanctification of the weak creatures, not tiring of them, despairing of them or rejecting them? But now we have found Him, the Man who combines in Himself all this and more than human tongue can utter. Now we can say, as has been prophesied, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him; and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Is. 25: 9).

He comes with succor speedy
To those who suffer wrong;
To help the poor and needy,
And bid the weak be strong;
To give them songs for sighing;
Their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying,
Were precious in His sight.

MONDAY AFTER THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. Eph. 5: 2. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without. Col. 4: 5. Let us walk in the light of the Lord. Is. 2: 5. Let — — no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Rom. 14: 13. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 1 John 2: 10.

The most delightful incense before God is love. For this reason Christ, who in love sacrificed Himself for us men, was most pleasing to God. For this reason God is also well pleased in all those who walk in love and do to their brethren as Christ has done to us; who sacrifice themselves for their brethren; who have learned

to renounce that which is dearest to them and to avoid the appearance of all evil in order not to give offence to anyone; who by grace do all that they can do to build up their neighbor, to save him and rescue him from perdition. If you would burn sweet incense to the Lord, let the flame of love burn in you; let it burn high in deeds of love; replenish it by earnest prayer and constant exercise in love, by walking in the light of love without offence. What was it that the Gentiles wonderingly saw in the first Christians? Their love to one another and to all men. Said the Gentiles, "Behold how they love one another," when they saw the Christians gathered together. No light shines so clearly; no light beams into other eyes so brightly as the light of love; in love there is no shadow, no blot of sin or offence. Every light which is not pure love is a painted light, only darkness. All the sweetness and outward appearance of love are insipid, an ill-smelling savor to God, if it does not edify and prompt us to walk in love according to the mind and example of Christ. He who despises, or lacks respect for a single human being, even though, as St. Paul says, he be "without," outside of the fellowship of Christ, a child of the world and of Satan, has no Christian love; his light is darkness, his love a cold reflection, a northern light which gleams but gives no warmth.

Unwearied, may I this pursue,
Dauntless to the high prize aspire;
Hourly within my soul renew
This holy flame, this heavenly fire;
And day and night be all my care
To guard this sacred treasure there.

TUESDAY AFTER THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. — — Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. Heb. 4: 9. 11. **They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. — — — And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.** Rev. 7: 16. 17.

When the children of Israel were led through the wilderness, they were promised that they should enter into rest, namely, into the quiet possession of the land of Canaan. But when they disobeyed the voice of God and let themselves be deceived by evil desires and hardened their hearts against Him, God swore in His holy wrath, "They shall not enter into my rest." He let them all die in the wilderness and led only their children and descendants into the promised land. Now St. Paul says, "We also have a land of promise, a Canaan; there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God," namely *here* the kingdom of God within us, and hereafter heaven, the kingdom of God in eternal glory. Into this land the Lord will lead us. In addition to this St. Paul urges emphatically (Heb. 3: 12 flw.), that we must not harden our hearts; we must not depart from the living God, nor be deceived through sin; we must not lose our participation in Christ but seek to preserve our first sure confidence steadfast to the end; we must not grow inactive, slothful, drowsy and cold; we must not become tired or frightened by tribulations, afflictions and struggles, or even desire from slothfulness to remain in the wilderness, not having the inclination to cut our way through the enemies in order to reach this true rest; we must not love the rest of the flesh too dearly. He exhorts us that none of us must retreat or fall behind or neglect to enter the eternal rest, the heavenly Canaan. For what does it benefit us to know of this rest, to have it preached to us, and even to write and speak about the kingdom of God, its time of advent, and the place and circumstances pertaining thereto? Knowledge benefits us nothing if we do not obey the voice of the Lord, if we do not watch and pray lest we fall according to the example of the Jews, and God again swear in His wrath, "They shall not enter into my rest." Read and consider thoroughly the third and fourth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Who would live alway away from his God?
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,

Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns:

Where the saints of all ages in harmony meet,
Their Savior and brethren transported to greet,
While the anthems of rapture unceasingly roll,
And the smile of the Lord is the feast of the soul.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. Ps. 46: 1-5. **We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.** Is. 26: 1.

"The city of God" is the Church of Christ, the communion of saints, the congregation of the faithful. The Church is ever in this world in great tribulation, but she cannot perish. The Church always is besieged, threatened, persecuted and ridiculed by her enemies, the flesh, the world and the devil. But the Church remains a firm, invincible city, no matter how weak she may seem from the outside, devoid of battlements, ordnance and weapons, exposed to all the attacks of the enemy, situated in the midst of the enemy's camp. Why, then, does she not fear? Why does she even dare to be glad? "The Lord is in the midst of her." Jesus dwells in His believers. They are all the "habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2: 22; 3: 17). Therefore she is glad. She has the streams of the river, yea, living rivers of water within (Joel 3: 18; John 7: 38; Ezek. 47: 1). The comfort of the Holy Spirit gladdens, strengthens and preserves her, so that she remains unmoved "though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." She is a rock in the sea. All waters and billows break against her. She

conquers all by Him who is with her, who never forsakes her, who makes her strong and mighty. Therefore, do not lose courage, ye believing souls. As long as you have the Lord with you, you shall not be moved. Only see to it that the Lord abides in you. If you depart from Him, or if He depart from you; if you fail to cling to Him; if you be not enclosed in Him as in a fortress and surrounded by Him as by a cordon of chariots, you will be put to shame. But he who abides in Him may sing, "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever" (Ps. 125: 2).

Savior, if of Zion's city
I, through grace, a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Thy Name.
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show;
Solid joys and lasting treasure
None but Zion's children know.

THURSDAY AFTER THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I desire to depart, and to be with Christ. Phil. 1: 21. 23. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thes. 4: 17. 18.

Christians have always regarded the departure from this life as a going home. As a child who sojourns in a foreign land receives with joy and gladness the news that it is to return to the ancestral home, to its native country, so the Christian rejoices when he thinks of the last moment of his earthly life—a moment that shall translate him to his eternal home, to his father's house. In this as well as in many other respects, death is a great, yea, the greatest gain, if Christ be our life. This must not be overlooked. He who in truth can say with the apostle, "To live is Christ," will also with the full consent of his heart be able to say, "And to die is gain." If Christ lives in you, you shall not die, but you shall gain infinitely by that which is called death. You shall

no more be in danger of losing that life which you here begin in Christ. You shall be brought into safety and live eternally glorified and blessed in Christ with God. Shall not he who regards death, terrible to all the world, in this beautiful and delightful form, desire with St. Paul to depart? Should he not live more in the world to come, where he is assured that he shall remain through all eternity? In this world he walks as a pilgrim and has no lasting habitation. True, as with St. Paul, it must be done in perfect resignation so that for the sake of the Lord and the brethren we are willing to remain here as long as it may be of any benefit; but no Christian is without longing for home, without life in heaven. The joyful and living hope of once being forever with the Lord, lifts him even now up to the homelike mansions of eternal peace.

Grant me to murmur not,
Heaven is my home.
Whate'er my earthly lot,
Heaven is my home.
Grant me at last to stand
There at Thine own right hand,
Jesus, in Fatherland:
Heaven is my home.

FRIDAY AFTER THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I entreated thy favor with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word. Ps. 119: 58. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth: and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Mat. 7: 7 flw.

The permission or right to appear before the face of God and to pray, is a mercy that can not be valued highly enough, nor sufficiently acknowledged and prized by any child of man. It is a privilege above all other privileges, a treasure to be preferred far above all other treasures. If a goldmine or a silvermine, a sea full of pearls and gems, were at your disposal, it ought not to be as dear and precious to you, or be able to make you as happy, rich and excellent as the right to pray, to come

to God and His treasury of grace, and draw from that all that you need. Oh, that all men understood this! Oh, that all men knew what lies reserved here for them who make use of prayer and who draw near to God in prayer! He who understands this, makes use of prayer first and above all and as often as possible. Every minute that he can use for that purpose is precious. When others think, I must go here or there to find gain, honor and pleasure, then he who is a judge of prayer thinks, I know of no better place, no happier course, no richer spring to all riches, honor and joy, than prayer, the communion with God. There I become rich, honored, favored, happy and excellent more than in any other place in heaven or on earth. Therefore he goes most frequently to prayer and does not allow himself by any inducement or enticement or for any price whatever, to be kept from prayer.

Oh, let us to His courts repair,
And bow with adoration there;
Low on our knees with reverence fall,
And on the Lord our Maker call.

SATURDAY AFTER THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows. — — — How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Ps. 137: 1. 4. **Weep not. — — — Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.** Luke 7: 13; 8: 52. **Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.** John 16: 20. **Weep not: behold the lion — — hath prevailed.** Rev. 5: 5.

Must not the children of Israel weep when, after being torn away from their Zion, they sit by the rivers of Babylon in a strange land? Shall they not weep when robbed of that which was dearest to them and cast among the Babylonians? They cannot do otherwise; the Lord Himself had told them, Ye shall weep. And yet Babylon, that laughs at the chastisement of God's children, had greater cause to weep. The children of God must weep when they are oppressed and driven by

Babylon. But they are not comfortless, nor despondent, nor hopeless. It is their lot to weep because of the present time; but they also rejoice in the future and its promises. For "the redeemed of the Lord shall return: and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy" (Is. 51: 11). Shall not a widow weep, when she has lost her only child? a teacher, when he has lost his pupil? a congregation, when it has lost its pastor and become like a widow and as one fatherless? "Weep not," says the Lord who is "the God of salvation" and to whom "belong the issues from death" (Ps. 68: 20). Must we not weep when we look into the dark future unable to see anything, when no one can open the book of the secret counsels of God and to read it? Must we not weep when black night, severe afflictions, threaten us on all sides and a ray of help and comfort is nowhere to be seeen? No. "Weep not," says the voice; "the Lion of the tribe of God hath prevailed. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world" (John 16: 33). We all must weep; yet the Christian weeps other tears in his sorrow than the world in its woe. The former's tears are mixed with comfort and hope and are easily and soon dried.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying,
"Earth has no sorrow that heaven can not cure."

THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

It is good for me to draw near to God. Ps. 73: 28. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 2 Cor. 6: 17. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. Luke 11: 23.

God draws near to those only who draw near to Him. He who does not remain with Christ in the Spirit, scatters. He who does not gather all the thoughts, longings and actions of the heart, soul and body, and ever turn them toward Christ, is poured out as water

and scattered as chaff before the wind. How can such a person possess and enjoy Christ? how can he be a partaker of Christ? Christ desires that the whole heart and being of man, all the faculties of the soul, be gathered and united to Him and in Him. He who is not thus with Christ and gathers with Him, is against Him and scatters, divides his strength and loses himself. The separation from the world, from wicked men, who hate God and the Word of God, who despise edification, prayer and devotion, and enjoy only vapid entertainments, news and pastimes, is an essential condition stipulated by the Lord God Himself both for preachers and hearers. Such separation has also the promise, when we steadfastly observe it, and do not join ourselves to the world and to wicked men, that it is more likely that they will join us and turn to that which is good (Jer. 15: 19). If you do not allow yourself to be perverted by evil, then those who are evil will allow themselves to become converted by you. Be steadfast, so that the ungodly world rather becomes godly through you than you become ungodly through it.

He knows what tends to our well-being;
He knows just when to comfort us;
If we are faithful, ever fleeing
Deceitful lusts and wickedness,
He comes before we are aware,
And manifests His loving care.

MONDAY AFTER THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. — — — And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom. 2 Tim. 4: 8. 18.

What a beautiful outlook! As dark as it often is beneath the clouds, so clear and beautiful it is beyond them. He who stands upon a high mountain has the storm and the clouds beneath his feet and sees the clear sky above him. He who raises himself in faith above

the sorrows and afflictions of this world and clings to the Word of God and His promises, sees before him the clear heaven, sees with undimmed eye that crown and glory which his Savior presents to him in His Word and reserves for him in His kingdom. He thinks, It is in safe hands; from Him none shall take it away. Who can take from me that which He has laid up for me? He who possesses this living hope cannot but long for its fulfillment and console himself therewith. He cannot keep his heart here; it escapes and tarries beyond, where is his eternal home and glory. For this strengthens the old and weary pilgrim. It eases his feet and is a refreshing beverage, a healing salve for the feet of the wanderer. What St. Paul says with such certainty is a matter of joy, "The Lord shall give to me the crown of righteousness, and *not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.*" He who waits for Him from one morning-watch to the other; who can hardly wait till He comes; who would rather see Him to-day than have to wait till to-morrow; who lives thus in ardent longing for Christ, shall receive the crown and the glory from His hand as surely as St. Paul received it.

Thou our only Hope and Guide!
Never leave us or forsake:
In Thy light may we abide
Till the endless morning break;
Moving on to Zion's hill,
Onward, upward, homeward still!

TUESDAY AFTER THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee. — — — If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? Ex. 33: 13-16; 34: 9.

The Lord said to Moses, "Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people; — — and I will send an angel before thee." But Moses said, "If Thy presence go not

with us, let us remain where we are. We will not go without Thee." Thus did Moses cling to the Lord and to His presence as a child to its mother. He would not take one step without Him, would not himself guide the people: the Lord should guide him and the people by His countenance. How am I to know the way? Thus said also the disciples of Jesus (John 14). Thus thinks and says every disciple of Jesus; he dare not take a step without the Lord. He does not want an angel only; no, he wants the Lord Himself. If the Lord was moved by Moses and the stiff-necked people that so often offended Him, to go with them, will He then refuse your prayer, when you as earnestly as Moses desire His guidance? Will He who promised, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you; I am with you alway even to the end of the world; where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them;"—will He leave you alone? How delightfully, how safely one walks when He goes before, when His countenance gives light! But he who trusts in himself and guides himself or allows himself to be guided by men, will have many a weary step, go backward rather than forward, and fall in many a pit. He who diligently looks toward the pillar of a cloud and the pillar of fire, the presence of the Lord in the heart, who in his goings and comings is guided by Him, as were the children of Israel, will safely and cheerfully walk through the desert of this present life and find the Land of Promise. Should the people of the old covenant have better guidance than the Lord's people of the new covenant? Shall not we also have a pillar of fire going on before us? Should the Lord only go with the bondmen of the law and not with the children of peace?

Ever be Thou our guide,
Our shepherd and our pride,
Our staff and song;
Jesus, Thou Christ of God,
By Thy perennial Word,
Lead us where Thou hast trod,
Make our faith strong.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. Ps. 37: 25. We are persecuted, but not forsaken. 2 Cor. 4: 9. For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake. 1 Sam. 12: 22.

David had seen and experienced much in the world, but he had not seen that God had forsaken or withdrawn His hand from any one who trusted in Him. He says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous." This, however, is not the same as being "forsaken" by God, but rather the same as being loved and visited by God; and he adds, "The Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Ps. 34: 19). When he was in such a strait that he nowhere could discover any comfort, he said, "My hope is in Thee" (Ps. 39: 7). It is a false way of thinking and speaking when, from the afflictions and persecutions which God permits to come upon us, we draw the conclusion that He has forsaken us. On the contrary, He has thereby visited us. Such ordeals should be to us a proof that God thinks of us. It is especially in afflictions and persecutions that we perceive Him the most, His presence, His wonderful help and mediation. We ought rather say, The Lord has forgotten me and forsaken me when I am not persecuted nor afflicted. Ask one who is afflicted and persecuted in Christ, if God has ever been nearer to him than when men and devils were against him and fell upon him in rage. When all men, friends as well as enemies, rise against us, when our father and mother forsake us, then the Lord takes us up, as is written in Ps. 27: 10. This psalm shows how he who is persecuted and forsaken by men feels when he knows that the Lord is near and His light shines for him.

Whate'er the burden be,
The cross upon me laid,
Or want or shame, I look to Thee;
Be Thou, O Christ, my Aid.

THURSDAY AFTER THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Rom. 6: 12. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. Gal. 5: 24. Flee also youthful lusts. 2 Tim. 2: 22.

We do not become free from temptations and lusts; but from the reign of the lusts we must be free or become free by faith in Christ. For when Christ reigns in us, sin with its lusts can not reign in us at the same time. If sin is yet lord of the house, Christ is not in us. Yet we must distinguish between temptation and dominion. You may be tempted and enticed to all evil, and yet be free and by the temptation become even more free from all evil. Many good souls think, when they are in Christ, that they should feel no more temptation. But it is as Christians that we have the most to do with temptation, as long as we live in the tabernacle of sin, the flesh. Sin has by conversion to Christ lost its crown and scepter in you. Sin can not abide this with indifference. Who would like to be robbed of his real or imaginary right and rule? Sin, therefore, seeks ever to dislodge Christ and once more seize its old power. It will not cease to do this untill it is carried with the body to the grave. Therefore, never be secure. Sin hides itself as the snake in the grass and attacks you suddenly when you least expect it. But if you are in Christ and abide unceasingly in Him, sin may be able to tempt you but not to overcome you. Sin is able only to try your faith, your affection and love to Christ, to strengthen you in the struggle and make you more and more its enemy and opponent.

From all Thy foes, their craft, their sword,
Protect us, Lord; maintain Thy Word;
Mercy Thy Name, that shall endure,
Here let us ever rest secure.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee,

saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. Is. 54: 8. 10.

Our gracious God speaks of His "wrath" and admits that He sometimes becomes wroth and that in His holy and righteous wrath He turns His face away even from those whom He loves and upon whom He, with everlasting kindness, has mercy. We can, however, not conceive of any passionate anger in God such as men have. In God everything, even His displeasure and disapproval of our infidelity, is pure love and wisdom. When we go astray, are unfaithful, and vex His Spirit, He turns His kind countenance from us, and a child of God feels that as keenly as if His face were changed into an expression of disfavor and wrath. God is Father, we know that; but He is no Eli. When the children do not follow the right paths, He lets them feel it immediately. Our age imagines God to be like Eli; a God who never grows angry with His children, no matter what wicked rogues they be. But the gracious God tells us something different. He who has seen Him and knows Him from experience and communion with Him, also knows that God often takes on a frowning countenance that is almost unbearable. Nevertheless, do not lose courage, though you many a time must feel the wrath of the Father. He is not angry with you in order to destroy you. His wrath shall cause you no loss: it is as beneficial as His love. His strokes benefit you more than His kisses, and He will soon turn to you again. His mercy is everlasting toward you, if you only turn back to Him and let His wrath serve to your betterment.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. James 1: 5. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. James 3: 13.

That which God regards as foolishness, the world regards as wisdom; and reversely, he that is wise before God is a fool in the eyes of the world. Therefore St. Paul says, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1: 22); and, "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise" (1 Cor. 3: 18). He also says plainly, that "not many wise men after the flesh are called," but nearly all fools—in the eyes of the world (1 Cor. 1: 26). For to become a Christian and to become a dolt are in the eyes of the world the same thing. To strive to attain "wisdom" means, then, to strive to attain true Christianity; and to be "wise" means to be a Christian, for all "the treasures of wisdom" are hid in the mystery of God and of Christ (Col. 2: 2. 3). "Christ is of God made unto us wisdom." He who has put on Christ, has put on wisdom. He that is without Christ is a fool, no matter how much he knows. The word of the cross is the school of true wisdom, even though it is to the world mere foolishness and weakness (1 Cor. 1: 23. 24). When you regard yourself as the greatest fool and the greatest sinner; when you lay hold of Christ with your whole soul as your only salvation, trust in Him alone and at every thought and step keep your eye on Him, then are you the wisest man on earth. Not to know anything save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, is the wisdom of the new covenant, and it will be the wisdom of the eternal covenant.

Thy ways, O Lord, with wise design,
Are framed upon Thy throne above,
And every dark and bending line
Meets in the center of Thy love.

My favored soul shall meekly learn
To lay her reason at Thy throne;
Too weak Thy secrets to discern,
I'll trust Thee for my guide alone.

THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. Rom. 10: 3. And all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts. Rev. 2: 23. I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Ps. 119: 125.

The reason why men do not know the righteousness which God through Christ creates in us, is that they do not know and are unwilling to know their own unrighteousness and sinfulness. Men lie to themselves. They are righteous and virtuous and think that they do not need justification in Christ. It is difficult for men to believe that all "come short of the glory of God," that they have not the least thing in which they may glory before God, who searches the reins and hearts; who sees deeper than human eyes; who sees the secret motives of every action. All our deeds are, as a rule, more or less tainted and consequently unrighteous. Therefore the much-praised righteousness of man is in the eyes of God an abominable unrighteousness, a polluted garment, all the more so because such a fine sign is put up and such a poor host dwells inside; our own righteousness is an article nicely gotten up outwardly but corrupt inwardly. He who, by the aid of the light of God knows himself, because he prays with David, "Give me understanding, that I may know Thy testimonies"—concerning my righteousness and Thy righteousness—does not trust in his own righteousness, but prays for justification in Christ, that his sins may be forgiven, and his soul be healed and cleansed from the filthiness of the body and the spirit.

Our pardon is Thy gift; Thy love
And grace alone avail us.

Our works could ne'er our guilt remove,
The strictest life must fail us.
That none may boast himself of ought,
But own in fear Thy grace hath wrought
What in him seemeth righteous.

MONDAY AFTER THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Phil. 2: 2. 3. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 1 John 3: 15.

Jesus prays earnestly to His Father for unity (John 17). It must, therefore, be very important to possess it, and to maintain it, and very dangerous to lose it. He who does not watch and pray will be unable to retain this love of unity. It often costs much wrestling and a severe struggle in the spirit to fell and by prayer to drive the devil away. He is ever anxious to cause discord among the brethren. Where dissension reigns, Satan has surely a hand in it. For where there is discord there is Satan's kingdom, and there he reigns. He always seeks to put asunder what God joins together. His motto is, *Divide et impera*: Divide, and you shall rule. Watch, therefore, and pray the God of love, the triune God, to maintain unity among you. Tread Satan under foot and let not love, the bond of perfection, be torn asunder. When no one seeks his own, but that which profits others; when everyone fights against vanity, vainglory and conceit in his heart, and strives to have Jesus only in the heart, then love shall never depart, peace never be destroyed, and God shall forever dwell among you. Do not give Satan the joy of seeing you separated from each other and from Christ. For if you agree not among yourselves, neither do you agree with Christ. He who has lost love and humility, concord and peace, has lost Christ and life eternal. Discord breeds hatred, and

where there is hatred, Christ, the life eternal, can not remain. Death and hell reign there.

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

TUESDAY AFTER THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I have hated the congregation of evil-doers; and will not sit with the wicked. I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O Lord. Ps. 26: 5. 6. **Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.** Ps. 73: 13.

The question is not here of that "innocence" which we ought to have before God; we all lack that innocence; for before God no man is innocent, but all are sinners (Rom. 3: 23; Job 14: 4). Only in comparison with the ungodly, who are without God and without His commandments in the world, may the godly man, the pardoned sinner, who keeps the Word of God and by God's grace shuns sin as much as possible, be called innocent. This is what the psalmist means when he says, "I have washed my hands in innocency. I will take no part in the wickedness of the world." When he saw that the ungodly man was prosperous and that the righteous man had to suffer a great deal, he almost became confused in his thoughts concerning God, so that he asked, "Yea, in vain have I cleansed my heart and washed my hands in innocency, since I nevertheless suffer so many reverses and afflictions. Thus did I nearly speak, but thereby would I have condemned all Thy children, all Thy godly men, that ever existed. For these, all of them, had to suffer trouble and affliction and to see the ungodly live at their side in happiness. But when I took notice of their end and saw how suddenly they were destroyed, I found it better to live uprightly and to suffer than to live happily but ungodly and perish." These thoughts are weighty and deserve to be earnestly considered, that we may be strengthened

thereby, and that we may not be robbed of that simplicity which leads to Christ by the treacherous world that ever scoffs at piety, boasts of its happiness, and considers and despises the righteous man as a fool and a fanatic. You must take no notice of the gibes of the world. Only look to Him whose approval shall be your portion forever and shall make you eternally happy. The world with its happiness shall perish; but the Lord remains forever. He who clings to Him shall be blest when all the world shall howl and gnash its teeth.

My Jesus, as Thou wilt!
If needy here and poor,
Give me Thy people's bread,
Their portion rich and sure.
The manna of Thy Word
Let my soul feed upon;
And if all else should fail,
My Lord, Thy will be done.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. Prov. 6: 6-8.

This is an admonition to diligence and activity in temporal things. The admonition is undoubtedly very necessary and commendable, because these insects by their industry put all men to shame. If we may learn from them in this temporal respect, why then not much more in regard to spiritual things? Look at the bees, for instance; their whole mode of life is the picture of a true believer. They draw the juice from which they produce honey and wax, pleasant and useful things, and from which they also make their dwellings, out of the flowers of the field. They enter the cups of the flowers as far as possible, and draw out as much as they are able to carry. To the Christian the Word of God is the most delightful, the sweetest and richest flower-garden. In this garden he alights now on this flower, now on that. He enters as far as possible into

the cup of the suffering and cross of Christ. He draws juice and strength therefrom and in his own heart by prayer and diligence he prepares it to his own edification and salvation as well as to the edification and salvation of others. Christ's words and deeds are not only kind, sweet and delightful, but also beneficial, salutary and rich in blessing. He creates joy and usefulness round about him. He who by meditation upon God's Word and by sojourning under the cross of Christ is filled by as much blessing and power as the bee that returns well loaded from the flowers, becomes a blessing to the land in which he dwells, a light to those who surround him. The affection of the bees for their queen is no less delightful to the heart of the Christian, who is unable to live without Christ, who follows Him everywhere and tarries where He tarries. But that which above all things deserves emulation is the secret activity of the bees, during which they will allow no one to see them with their queen. They are untiring in their work. They take great care to cover it, building into all windows and openings through which one might observe them. Thus the Christian does not let his left hand know what his right hand doeth. It is enough for him that He who sees in secret knows. He does not place his deeds on exhibition; he does not do good to be seen of men. Furthermore, the bee does not spin out of her own self as the spider, but she seeks what God has given. Thus the Christian seeks nothing in himself; he seeks only where the right juice is to be found: in the Word of Christ and in the fellowship of His sufferings.

See, to Thee I yield my heart;
Shed Thy life through every part.
A pure temple I would be,
Wholly dedicate to Thee.

THURSDAY AFTER THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Gen. 50: 20. His work is perfect: for all his ways are

judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. Deut. 32: 4. **If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?** Heb. 12: 7.

We forget so easily that God is our Father and that His intention is good and fatherly in all things that He permits to come upon us; He can intend nothing evil. How could He who is eternally good do anything evil to us, or permit anything that causes us harm, if we love Him? However much evil men intend against us, as Joseph's brethren when they sold him into Egypt, yet God means it for the best when He permits such things to take place. Even when the brother is sold, God sees the brethren buying corn from the brother that was sold, who by his stores rescues them and their father from death by starvation. As Joseph is being thrown into the well, God sees that this well is the way that leads to the throne. Every one who trusts in God will experience something similar. He shall at last be able to say to his persecutors, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good." God uses the wickedness of men as a rod with which He chastises His children and makes them good. Therefore, murmur not; do not lose courage; do not doubt the goodness of God when He permits things that no human mind can comprehend. Think always as Joseph and Moses thought: God's works are perfect; all His ways are right. God is faithful; He is our Father and trains us as children who need chastisement. If we were not evil, God would permit no evil to come upon us; but in this way He would curb the evil in us by the evil from without. By afflictions which in His hand are always good and salutary, God frees us from afflictions.

My Jesus, as Thou wilt!
Oh, may Thy will be mine!
Into Thy hand of love
I would my all resign.
Through sorrow as through joy
Conduct me as Thine own,
And help me still to say,
My Lord, Thy will be done!

FRIDAY AFTER THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 1 Cor. 13: 1.

The apostle who speaks so much of faith and makes it the only condition of salvation, shows in this chapter, as in all the epistles, clearly enough what kind of faith he means. Faith and charity with him are the same things. Faith without charity is as a shell without the kernel. All talk about faith not united with charity is like "a tinkling cymbal," a corpse without a soul. Oh, that those who speak so unconditionally of faith and so readily quote the apostle Paul, would not overlook nor forget that the same apostle here links faith in such a way to charity, that he makes it dependent upon charity, and that without charity faith is nothing and comes to shame before God. When men hear such a declaration of Scripture, they are at once ready to compose themselves and think, "I submit to that. If I need do nothing but believe, then I am soon done with it." We forget to investigate and to ask, What faith does the apostle mean? It is evident that true faith is something grand because it works such great things. Faith cannot be the possession of everybody, since the faith usually seen accomplishes so little. In short, if all who imagine themselves heroes of faith would thoroughly weigh this chapter, they would soon be shipwrecked as to their faith and discover that their faith is aground on a sandbar and that they in reality have no faith because they have no charity. Alas! how many disappointments there are in man's most sacred and important concern. How must we not watch, pray and examine ourselves before the face of God, that selfishness shall not delude us and declare us saved without charity, which is the true and unmistakable criterion of the blessed children of God. All is nothing, even all that is good is in vain, if it be not sanctified by love. Come, sweet Charity, come and fill us wholly and completely!

Come, Almighty, to deliver,
Let us all Thy life receive;
Graciously return, and never,
Never more Thy temples leave!
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve Thee as Thy hosts above,
Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing,
Glory in Thy precious love.

SATURDAY AFTER THE ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more. Ps. 39: 12. 13. **For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.** Heb. 13: 14; 1 Chron. 29: 15.

The saints of old felt that they were not at home here. They were all home-sick. They regarded themselves as strangers, as sojourners who for some time are received only and allowed on foreign soil. They cannot help longing for their native country. He who loves his native land never feels so contented as when he is on the home soil, no matter how prosperous he may be. He can never forget it. Blessed is he who feels himself a stranger upon the earth. Blessed is he who never feels perfectly contented here, except in so far as even on earth he lives in heaven. Though many earthly joys smile upon an heir of heaven, he nevertheless thinks, "It is far different beyond. Here all is nothing. Oh, that I were at home!" Here everything is in reality but a discipline and a trial. It is only in view of this that he readily remains here awhile, as none who is untried, no child that has lacked chastisement, is permitted to enter the home in heaven. Notwithstanding all this, the pilgrim sighs, "Oh, spare me!—stay the chastisement awhile, that I may recover strength, before I go hence." He sighs for some ray of grace, and longs for the sun now and then to penetrate the clouds, that he at least may see a rift in the sky, a glimpse of his home. Thus clings the heart to the heavenly home when it has made sure of its sonship and right as an heir.

Draw us to Thee, and teach us
E'en now that rest to find,
Where turmoils cannot reach us,
Nor cares weigh down our mind.

THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Ps. 139: 6. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? John 3: 12.

David could not comprehend the omnipresence and the omniscience of God, but placed them nevertheless vividly before his eyes, and lived in the enjoyment of the mystery he did not understand. Therein he did right. Nicodemus wanted regeneration more intelligibly explained, so that he could understand it; but this the Savior did not like, and upbraided him that he did not believe upon the mere testimony of Jesus that which he would never be able to comprehend. Ezra troubled his head by trying to reason out the origin of evil and the wonderful ways and providences of God, until he had soared too high; and Uriel helped him down again by presenting to him these three problems, viz: "Weigh the fire, measure the wind, bring the day of yesterday back." When Ezra answered, "Who beneath the heavens can do that?" Uriel answered, "When you do not understand that which grows up with you, and which is so closely related to you, how then can you think of understanding that which lies so high, how can you think of comprehending the ways of the Most High?" (Ezra's Book 4, chap. 4*). Let this serve you as a warning that you do not ask to comprehend that which is too high or too deep for you, but that you seek to comprehend that which God has placed near you. He Himself by the light of His Spirit explains to your heart all salutary truths and makes you blessed in the enjoyment of them. Do not ponder on the unsearchable mysteries of election, of predestination, of universal restoration, and

*) This book is apocryphal, and to be had in Latin only.

the like, but use all diligence, all your faculties, and every moment of your time in thinking, speaking, and acting as an elect, foreordained and redeemed Christian. Do not ponder on the origin of evil; rather drive evil out of your heart and stop the fountain of evil in you by intimate communion with that which is good, into which you have been incorporated through Christ. Do not ponder on the duration of infernal punishment, but become good and saved by your Redeemer's grace, that you may be worthy and certain of a blessed eternity, and escape the wrath to come. For the moments that are granted to you for that purpose are short, and you have not a single one to spare for other things. If you want to be saved, do not lose a single hour. Make haste and be saved.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His works in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

MONDAY AFTER THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? Ps. 42: 10; 43: 2. **Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.** 1 Pet. 1: 6. Cfr. Heb. 12: 11, and 2 Cor. 7: 10. **Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.** Ps. 30: 5.

The first experiences of grace make the heart so happy that it thinks itself translated into heaven and deems it impossible ever again to become sorrowful. It feels only joy in Jesus and with Jesus, and regards all else as nothing. Every affliction seems sweet and pleasant. The heart rejoices to bear it for Jesus' sake. But soon there is a change and the heart will not submit to it. The poor heart is not yet capable of perfect, unceasing joy. Many things still lie hidden in it which first must be driven out by afflictions. There is yet much impurity in its joy, that can be melted only by the heat of tribulation as dross is separated from gold.

But if the soul surrender in a child-like manner to the Purifier, every affliction generates a new and greater joy. In joy one does not know himself but regards himself as perfectly holy and good. Afflictions and temptations unveil the evil depths and give us an insight into our inner man and we discover things which we would never have found if the Lord had not enlightened our hearts by the light of the cross. No light is purer and clearer than the light of the cross, the heat of tribulation. By it we see that which we do not see in broad daylight. During temptation it seems as if all lights were gone out, and all were darkness; and yet we see more by this twilight than by the light of joy.

Be it with me as He is willing,
Whose mercy is a boundless sea;
May He Himself my heart be stilling,
That this may ne'er forgotten be;
Then it will rest in joy and woe,
On mercy, while it beats below.

TUESDAY AFTER THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself. Luke 9: 23. Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me — — — whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14: 27. 33. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. Eph. 5: 1. Be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb. 6: 12.

By His merits Christ has redeemed us from sin, but not from following Him, much more to His imitation. Whoever believes that by Christ's merits and justification he is not only set free from the punishment and condemnation of sin, but also from its power and rule, that he no longer must serve sin as a chained bondman, but has by Christ received and receives daily grace, power and life, so that he now voluntarily clings to the Savior, follows after Him, and becomes like Him, has the true faith regarding redemption. All others remain in the prison, in the chains of sin, of the flesh and of the world,

and shout, We are redeemed! Who will believe the declaration of these fools that they are free, so long as they carry chains and sit in prison? Christ has emphatically made the imitation of His holy life, self-denial and patience, a condition of being His disciple. He who emancipates himself therefrom, renounces Christ, His Spirit and His Gospel. For this is a "power of God unto salvation" for the whole man. There are many who boast of the doctrine of justification and laugh at the imitation of Christ, and disregard it as something pertaining to the law, exactly as if Christ were dead for sinners that they might live lawlessly to sin and to the world, and not to Him who died for them. According to St. Paul, you will not inherit the promise by a faith that makes Christ a servant of sin, but by "faith and patience," that is, by a faith that works patience and gives you strength to carry your cross, to deny yourself, and to become like unto Christ—a follower of God.

Breathe, oh, breathe Thy loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast!
Let us all in Thee inherit,
Let us find the promised rest.
Take away the love of sinning,
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? Mat. 14: 31. Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief. Rom. 4: 20.

He who wilfully doubts, has no faith and confidence; or, he has a treacherous, false heart which is not upright before God: he will not repent nor confess his sins and unfaithfulness to the Savior, so as not to be obliged to put off sin. He who is weak, but honestly confesses his sins and repents before God and prays for grace and mercy for the sake of Jesus, his Redeemer, should never doubt His mercy and faithfulness; otherwise he denies the truthfulness of God, dis-

honors His Word, and gainsays the clear sayings and promises in which God proclaims and secures to us all that we pray for with an honest heart and a confident faith in Jesus' name. There are, however, weak and tempted souls, who, in spite of all the uprightness of their hearts, doubt, or are, at least, troubled by involuntary, hateful doubts which come from hell. So far from harming them, such doubts rather train their faith, when they, notwithstanding all diligence, are unable to keep them away by prayer and watchfulness, and do not wilfully consent to them but reject and condemn them. We must, however, always examine ourselves and investigate whether the reason of our doubt lies in our own heart, or whether they do not rise from some impurity of the heart. Pray earnestly, pray unceasingly, for light to see if anything lies hidden in your heart. Only be honest, and you need not doubt that the Lord will grant your prayer, for He has said so.

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

THURSDAY AFTER THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleasant. Cant. 1: 16. Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee. Ps. 31: 19.

When God requires that we love Him with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength, and with all our mind, He does not demand too much. He deserves our love. We owe Him love above everything else. He alone is worthy of all our love. For there is nothing on us, nothing in us, nothing outside of us, above or beneath us; there is nothing in all the world, and in all the heavens, which His love, unmerited by us, has not created, given or promised us. If all this can not move us to love Him, then this fact alone, that He has sent to us Jesus, who blots out our sins, and is the fountain of eternal life, ought to be sufficient to present

God to us as the most lovable one. It is this grace which gives to all other divine acts of love their true value. What would heaven and earth be to us if there were no Jesus, who reconciled us to God, justified, cleansed and sanctified us? Then we could neither enjoy God nor anything divine. We could not rejoice in any happiness if Jesus had not made us able to receive it. We were, and would remain, dead in sin. How shall they who are dead be able to love? how shall they be able to rejoice? Jesus being our life, He is also our joy, our love; we place nothing above Him. "Yes, my beloved," says the soul, "Thou art fair, Thou art pleasant. There is nothing fairer, nothing more pleasant than Thou art; for through Thee all that is fair becomes fair and all that is pleasant becomes pleasant." But this mercy and love, this blessed knowledge is hidden. His lovableness and fairness are known only to the hearts who fear Him, that is His Word; who are anxious not to offend Him; who are concerned not to love anything outside of Him; who have given Him their whole heart because He has forgiven them all their sins and taken up His abode in their heart. These can not sufficiently rejoice in Him and love Him. Their love can never have its fill in Him. He appears to them ever more fair, ever more pleasant, the more they love Him. They find heaven, the highest happinesss, in loving Him.

Fair is the sunshine,
Fairer the moonlight
And the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer,
Than all the angels in the sky.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Eph. 6: 11. 12.

If Satan and his influence or his attacks upon us were only the phantom of a morbid imagination, St. Paul, and the Holy Ghost through him, would not warn us so anxiously against him; he would not hand us such an armor against Satan, nor admonish us so emphatically to resist and fight him. Yes, my beloved, this enemy does certainly exist. He is terrible, shrewd and strong. His wiles and assaults are planned very artfully and aimed in secret. This is only too true. But the soul experiences nothing thereof, before it has grasped and put on Christ. For as long as we cling to the world and serve flesh and blood, Satan has nothing whatever against us; on the contrary, we then live in his favor, under his care and protection. But renounce the world and the flesh, and you have all devils aganist you, who with spiritual wickedness and treachery place nets before you and shoot fiery darts against you. If you are not accoutered in that armor of God which the apostle Paul describes in the following verses of the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians; and if you do not fight bravely against these spiritual princes and mighty rulers of darkness, you will not remain master of the field, but grow weary, succumb, lose courage and yield to the world and to Satan: you will be conquered and taken captive. The old lusts will awaken in you; you will yield to them, and be fascinated by them. Therefore, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Mat. 26: 41).

Though devils all the world should fill,
All watching to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill,
They cannot overpower us.
This world's prince may still
Scowl fiercely as he will,
He can harm us none;
He's judged, the deed is done,
One little word o'erthrows him.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. John 16: 23. 24. And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee. Ps. 9: 10. For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity. Ps. 25: 11.

"Our help is in the name of the Lord" only, as David says (Ps. 124: 8). This was prophesied by Zephania, who says, "Then (in the new covenant) will I turn to the people a pure language (pure lips), that they may call upon the name of the Lord" (of Christ) Zeph. 3: 9). "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered" (saved and blessed) (Joel 2: 32). Blessed, then, is he who knows the name of Jesus, not only the two syllables Je-sus, but the power and salvation of this person, this Being in the perfect likeness of God, He in whom "the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily," who has "received the Spirit without measure," who is ours with all that He is and has, because He died and gave Himself for us. His name, therefore, and all that it contains: His merits and worthiness, His power, the pleasure of God that rests in Him, is ours; we may plead it before God, and come before God clothed in His name. He who thus enters into the presence of God shall be received, heard and pardoned; he shall obtain all that he desires and asks of God. He who stands thus in the presence of God is immovable and firm. On the other hand, he who pleads the name of Jesus as did the exorcists of whom we read in Acts 19: 13 flw., is not regarded either by God or the devil. To such a person it will be said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who art thou?" You do not belong to Jesus and Jesus does not belong to you. You must, therefore, put on Jesus, and have His name written in your heart. Then you can pray in the name of Jesus and expect to be heard. He, however, who has Jesus on the tongue, but

has the world and the devil in his heart, pleads in vain before God the name of His Son.

Come, my soul, thy suit prepare,
Jesus loves to answer prayer:
He Himself has bid thee pray,
Therefore will not say thee nay.

Thou art coming to a King:
Large petitions with thee bring;
For His grace and power such,
None can ever ask too much.

THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might. 1 Chron. 29: 10-12.

This was the prayer and song of David, the king, when the people brought gifts to the building of the temple, many thousand hundredweights of gold and silver, and precious stones; for they gave gladly and voluntarily of an upright heart. Then the pious king rejoiced and praised God, the King of Israel. One may infer from this how full his heart was of the realization of the greatness and glory of God, the Messiah. He confesses that everything in all the heavens and in all the worlds belongs to God, who is the Highest, above all authority, all princes, and all that are mighty, above everything high and low, and by whose hand all things are guided and directed. Our Lord is King in the three kingdoms which contain all things that were, are, and ever shall be. He is the King of heaven and earth, the kingdom of nature; King in the kingdom of grace, and King in the kingdom of eternal glory. Yes, Christ is the ruler of all things, as He Himself said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Mat. 28: 18). How their hearts rejoice who own Him as their Lord, their Head, their Shepherd, their Brother and Friend!

Whatever they look at or conceive of in heaven or on the earth—of it all they think and say, It belongs to my Lord and Brother. "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24: 1); "heaven is my throne, and the earth is my foot-stool" (Is. 66: 1). How his heart swells in pride, the heart of him who is the sheep, the servant, the child of this Lord and King! What should that heart fear which knows that all things are in His hand who has loved us and given Himself for us? Christ is ours; then is not everything that belongs to Him ours to salvation? Hence St. Paul says, "All things are yours." If only Jesus dwells in us and has established His kingdom of grace in our hearts, all His kingdoms, all things are ours. Therefore, see to it that Jesus dwells in your heart.

Thine shall forever be
Glory and power divine,
The sceptre, throne, and majesty
Of heaven and earth, are Thine.

MONDAY AFTER THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Shew thy marvelous loving kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them. Ps. 17: 7. **The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.** 1 Sam. 2: 6. **He woundeth, and his hands make whole.** Job 5: 18; Hos. 6: 12. **He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.** Is. 28: 29.

Human reason can not submit to the providences of God, the ways in which He leads His saints and elect. For the most part God's leadings seem strange, incomprehensible, unreasonable and altogether at variance with the object in view, yet ending in perfect blessedness, glory and triumph. Only look to Golgotha. God slays Him who is to make all alive. He allows Christ, by whom all should be saved and received into sonship, to be condemned, cursed and rejected. In order to gather the sheep, He allows the Shepherd to be torn asunder by the wolves. At Christ's death God permits darkness to

fall upon the whole earth in order that there might arise a Light for all men. In this way He leads all who are dear to Him. From the Original on Golgotha all copies are taken. Mark that and look diligently at the way in which God's Son, the Well-beloved of the Father, walks; for this way you also must walk, within and without, if you allow the Lord to lead you, not leading yourself. Your heart will often feel bruised, wounded, forsaken, yea, dead: you will believe that you are completely lost and already in hell. But if your heart even then does not depart from the Lord; if you still trust in Him and stretch your arms out toward Him, then He will inspire you with new life, enlighten and gladden you, and, as it were, transport you into heaven. He puts a new song in your mouth. Do not, however, become self-sufficient; do not become secure. The sun will once more go down; the sky will once more be clouded; but it will clear off again. Do not be frightened because of this change. Thus God deals with us here on earth. Only cling to Christ in faith. Through everything, through light and darkness, through life and death, through heaven and hell, He leads you securely to the goal.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take:
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

TUESDAY AFTER THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. John 6: 47. 51. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. Is. 41: 18. The river of God — — — is full of water. Ps. 65: 9.

There is no doubt that the Lord's Supper is the means most rich in blessing to make us ever partakers of Him, and to sustain our intimate fellowship with Him, so that He abides in us, and we in Him (John 6:

56). But who doubts that outside of the Holy Supper, the soul may have Jesus just as near, and by faith and ardent love may be just as much a partaker of Him, since He is willing, at every moment gladly to impart Himself to every hungry and longing soul? Also outside of the Sacrament He is at all times the Bread of Life which nourishes the eternal life of the soul and is indispensable in order that our spiritual life may be preserved, strengthened, and developed. A sound and healthy person must daily have something to eat; he cannot be without daily bread. He to whom Jesus is not just as indispensable as daily bread, as daily food and drink, does certainly not live in Christ, as He Himself has said (John 6: 56). Without the food of the Lord, there is no life of the Lord in us. Therefore, the holy, sacramental Supper does not make the spiritual, unbroken, daily Supper superfluous, but, on the contrary, necessary and indispensable. He who has really tasted of Christ, hungers daily, thirsts for Him always. To hunger and thirst for Him, to long and yearn for Him, is the same as eating Him, sustaining and nourishing His life in us. He has instituted this spiritual communion, this daily Supper (John 6: 53—56). In this passage He at least does not exclusively speak of the Sacrament. He has at any rate promised the daily communion (Rev. 3: 20), "I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me." Consequently, Christ can always sup with us and we with Him. The way in which it is done, He Himself must teach us. Even David speaks of this (Ps. 23). The saints of all times, before and after the manifestation of Christ on earth, have been "eating" of Him and living by Him; they have "feasted of fat things full of marrow" (Is. 25: 6), and have been refreshed by the "rivers" and "fountains" which He opened in high places, and in the midst of valleys, yea, in all places where souls have thirsted for the water of life The river of God, which is full of water, was well known to them. Come, come, all ye that are athirst, come each day and draw water with joy from the wells of salvation!

Thou givest all I wanted,
The Food that death destroys;
And Thou hast freely granted
The Cup of endless joys.
Ah, Lord, I do not merit
The favor Thou hast shown,
And all my soul and spirit
Bow down before Thy throne.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. James 1: 6. **Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.** Mat. 6: 8. **I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.** John 16: 26. 27.

A cheerful and child-like confidence is the very soul of prayer. Without such confidence, prayer is dead and barren, a punishment and a hardship. He who prays must, in the first place, know what he is doing. He goes to God who has called him, and commanded him to come and to pray to Him in time of all trouble and need, yea, concerning whatsoever that oppresses his heart (Phil. 4: 6). Even herein lies a good ground for confidence. To this is added, secondly, the faith and conviction that God knows what I lack, what oppresses me, before I have told it to Him. That which oppresses the heart of the child, also touches the heart of the Father. Thirdly, the assurance given by the Son, "The Father Himself loveth you. My intercession is not even needed." Nevertheless, He prays for us abundantly in order that we should not entertain the least doubt. That is the reason for the above quoted admonition of St. James, that we are not to doubt. For he who doubts the word of promise of the true and faithful One, dishonors and blasphemes God; his prayer is rather a sin and blasphemy than a service and worship of God. God has said that I should pray and that He will give. Jesus has said that the Father will give us, that He knows our need, that He knows us.

"Faith abides by this and sends doubts to the devil, from whom they came." Yes, dear praying soul, lay hold of God and His faithfulness with both hands. Do not let go even though all devils would tear you away. "I will not let thee go, except Thou bless me" (Gen. 32: 26). Thus spoke even the Israelite. What, then, should not a Christian do who has God as his Brother in the flesh? One brother must not leave the other, nor must any one leave his own members. Christ vouches for that.

Thy everlasting Truth,
Father, Thy ceaseless love
Sees all Thy children's wants, and knows
What best for each will prove.
And whatsoe'er Thou wilt,
Thou dost, O King of kings!
What Thy unerring Wisdom chose,
Thy power to being brings.

THURSDAY AFTER THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. 1 Cor. 1: 30. 31. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John 15: 14.

If you are in Christ Jesus, Christ is in you; He belongs to you and you belong to Him. He who possesses Christ, let him hold that fast which he has, that no man take his crown (Rev. 3: 11). "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance" (Mat. 13: 12). If Christ has been "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1: 30), then all His wisdom and righteousness, all His power to sanctify and redeem, is vouchsafed to us. Thus He belongs to us with all that He is and has. He is ours. What a word full of good fortune and of joy: He is ours! Could we receive anything more? No; certainly not. Now everything depends on whether we know how to value and make use of this great gift

of the Father according to its great and infinite worth. If we do not prize it, it will be taken from us. Now everything depends on this, that we really allow ourselves to be made righteous, sanctified and redeemed. He is thereunto given to us and bestowed upon us. With that object in view, the hand of God gives Jesus to us. But then we must also receive Him from God's hand and allow Him to do that work in us whereunto He is sent. We must bring as a sacrifice to Him our foolishness, our sinfulness, our unrighteousness, and whatever that keeps us bound and captive, allowing the Son to make us free, to redeem us. Then we are free indeed. Then Christ has been made all this to us, not only in the mind of God, but He is all this to us in reality.

Hosannah! blessed Jesus,
Come in our hearts to dwell,
And let our lives and voices
Thy praise and glory tell.

FRIDAY AFTER THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. 1 John 2: 17. **For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. — — — But the word of the Lord endureth forever.** 1 Pet. 1: 24. 25.

The lust of the world tears many from Christ and His Word, because they do not believe that Christ can give greater pleasures to them that love Him than the world can offer them. They regard the union and fellowship with Jesus as the saddest thing in the world, an austerity in which there can not be one hour of real happiness. But how these blind people deceive themselves! They do not know that "the fulness of joy" is in His presence, and "pleasures" at His right hand forevermore (Ps. 16: 11). They have no conception of true joy and no taste for the pure pleasure of the heart or they could not regard the lust of the world as joy. The joys of the world are as evanescent and unsatisfacto-

ry as the joys of a dream which no longer exist when we awake; they are as soap-bubbles that vanish at a touch. That they who know not the joy in Christ do not seek it, is more pardonable than that you, who have tasted it, depart from it, carried away by the deceitful and passing lust of the world. Therefore, give the world a wide berth, beloved. Do not come near its pleasure-circles; but suffer yourself rather to be spoken evil of and to be reproached, as St. Peter says the first Christians were (1 Pet. 4: 1—4). Let the will of God, that which is pleasing to Christ, be your delight and joy; this delight and joy cannot be taken from you. That which gives you no joy in death, which does not remain with you beyond the grave,—do not consider it worthy of being coveted; rather despise it. Let the joy in the Lord be your strength, for that lasts forever.

Lead me to green pastures, lead me
By the true and living way,
Shield me from each strong temptation
That might draw my heart astray;
And if e'er my feet should turn,
For each error let me mourn.

SATURDAY AFTER THE THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me. Ps. 101: 6. **Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised.** Heb. 10: 23.

The faithful God desires faithful hearts. God has no pleasure in him who errs. He who has received grace must preserve it and follow its course. Those who are unfaithful, who do not keep faith and troth, and through thoughtlessness or love of the world disregard and throw away the treasure and jewel of God's mercy which was bestowed upon them, will receive a punishment more terrible than they who had never known it. Let us in sacred fear of losing grace and becoming faithless, watch and pray the Lord, the faithful God, to preserve and to establish us in His grace. He who expects anything from

himself and believes himself to possess a steadfast faithfulness unto the end, will surely become unfaithful. On the other hand, he who mistrusts his own vacillating heart, and clings ever closer to the Lord, daily asking Him for a faithful heart, will be preserved. Oh, seek often the eyes that look down from above for the faithful of the land; seek them! You will soon notice in those eyes whether they regard you as faithful. Only the faithful shall "dwell" with Him. What, then, of the unfaithful? They shall have part in "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21: 8).

O God, Thou faithful God,
Thou Fountain ever flowing,
Without whom nothing is,
All perfect gifts bestowing;
A pure and healthy frame,
O give me, and within
A conscience free from blame,
A soul unhurt by sin.

THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 2 Cor. 6: 16; Lev. 26: 12. What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? Deut. 4: 7.

What a glorious congregation is that which is a living temple to the Lord! A "living God" must have a living temple. Dead idols are in dead stone-houses. What condescension in God toward us! How this love ought to humble us! How ought we not, as the temple of God, to consecrate our body and spirit to the Lord. Dear soul, how can you ever forget who it is that dwells in you, whose house and temple you are? Your heart is consecrated to the Lord by the blood of Christ, with which you are bought; do not destroy, desecrate, and dishonor that temple by unworthy thoughts and emotions. On the contrary, the thought that God "dwells" and "walks" in you, should awaken and maintain an untiring watchfulness in order that you may walk, think,

speak and act worthily of that God who is so condescending to you, who remains so near to you, and exalts and honors you so highly in having chosen your heart as His dwelling-place and throne. All this is difficult for us to believe. It is too great, too much, too gracious; but Christ Himself has said it (John 14: 23). And as the Lord even in the old covenant has solemnly declared and promised it, and as every pious soul who enters into his own heart and with faith and humility seeks the Lord there, finds Him and enjoys communion with Him, we cannot doubt it. We have what we believe and what the faithful One has promised. Only let us be His people, faithfully devoted to Him, clinging to Him with true hearts, and He will never cease to be our God, our Immanuel.

Let me never from Thee stray,
Keep me in the narrow way;
Fill my soul with joy divine,
Keep me, Lord, forever Thine!

MONDAY AFTER THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. Ps. 18: 1. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. 1 John 4: 8. 16. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Mat. 22: 37.

You desire to be loved by your brother, your children and friends, not in words only, but in deed and from the heart. Should God be satisfied with a love of the lips, which is no love at all, but only a tinkling cymbal? No: he who knows the kind mercies of God, the love and grace of Christ, who sacrificed Himself for us with body and soul and all His powers, does not hesitate to surrender himself so completely with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his powers, to the love of God and of Jesus Christ, that he retains nothing for himself. He belongs completely to his God and Savior, lives and dies for Him, forgets himself, and becomes

filled with God, filled with his Savior, and breathes, walks and stands, watches and sleeps, works and rests, only for Him. Nor is it the reward, the sweetness and delight, which love even here carries with it, nor fear nor hope, nor punishment nor reward, nor loss nor gain, that impels and animates love. It is only love, pure love, that causes love to love. It is the inner beauty, glory, goodness, matchlessness and loveliness of God and of Jesus Christ, that awakens the soul to love, sustains it and evermore increases love. The more it learns to know Him, the more it learns to love Him. Its eyes are ever turned toward Him; it is ever in God and God is in it; it ever dwells in Christ, and Christ ever dwells in it. They ever regard each other, and are thereby kindled to greater mutual love. Love increases in proportion as the knowledge of the beloved increases. Therefore St. John says so truly, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." He who knows Him must love Him. A look to God, to Christ, charms the soul to love. The soul can no longer do otherwise,—it must love Him; He is too beautiful, too delightful; the heart knows not how to avoid loving Him.

Teach me all Thy steps to trace,
Strong to follow in Thy grace;
Learning how to love from Thee,
Loving Him who first loved me.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. — — — And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. John 10: 9. 28. **But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark — — — then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.** Gen. 8: 9.

He who, as a sheep of Christ, hears His voice, follows Him as his Shepherd and does not hear the voice of the stranger (flesh and blood, the world and Satan); he does not fear death, since his Shepherd has not only opened

the door to him but even here has bestowed upon him the beginning of eternal life and has assured him that beyond He will forever preserve him and never let him perish or be plucked out of his hand. Behold, you are in His hand now. He will forever carry you in His hand. He Himself will nourish and refresh you. He who does not have faith in this hand must be much given to mistrust. What, then, do you fear? That His hand will let go of you and give you up a prey to Satan and hell? The hand which is pierced for your sake, which for your sake was in hell and in the jaws of death? No, dear soul. If you do not wrench yourself out of His hand; if you yourself do not run away, that hand will never let go of you. Should not He love you, His own dearly-bought sheep, more than Noah loved his dove? Yes, most assuredly, if you, as that dove, no longer find a place on the earth where you may rest your foot, and you fly to the ark of heaven. Only believe fully and steadfastly; then your good Shepherd will reach His hand out to you and take you in to Himself,—the hand in which you are even now and in which you shall ever rest; that hand will never withdraw itself from you. Only reach out your own hand to Him; commit yourself each day confidently into His hands; then you shall never suffer want.

The Lord my Shepherd is;
I shall be well supplied:
Since He is mine,
And I am His.
What can I want beside?

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth. Ps. 25: 10. Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee ;— — — blessed be the Lord; for he hath showed me his marvelous kindness. Ps. 31: 19. 21. He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. Ps. 32: 10.

He who experiences the "mercy" of the Lord, can not sufficiently praise it, even as David in all his psalms.

Though it often seemed to David that God's mercy had come to an end, so that he cried, "Is His mercy clean gone forever? Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" (Ps. 77: 8. 9) he yet remembered the works of the Lord, His former wonders upon him and his people; then he could no longer keep from praising the mercy of the Lord and rejoicing in it. The Lord remains forever the same, always the exceedingly merciful One, even when He seems to us otherwise. Do not forget that, beloved. For even though you had experienced His mercy in all its greatness, He will still permit you to get into such outward and inward circumstances that it will be hard for you to believe that He is still merciful; you will at least be strongly tempted to doubt whether He is still merciful to you. Do as David did: remember the former wonders of His mercy which He has shown to your heart or to other persons. But if you love Him uprightly and intensely, faithfully and constantly, God will often seem to you so merciful that it is hard for you to believe that He really is so merciful; you fear that God's mercy may prove a disappointment or a delusion, as you are unable to comprehend why He is so merciful and kind to you. The more you humble yourself before Him and regard yourself unworthy of His mercy, the more will He overwhelm you with grace and mercy. Therefore, be humble when He is kind and gracious to you. Be undismayed and confident when He seems ungracious and unkind.

O bless the Lord, my soul!
Nor let His mercies lie
Forgotten in unthankfulness,
And without praises die.

His wondrous works and ways
He made by Moses known;
But sent the world His truth and grace
By His beloved Son.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Hope maketh not ashamed. — — — For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. Rom. 5: 5-7. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. 1 Pet. 3: 18.

Let the Crucified One often appear before your eyes. Let this picture of the greatest love of God be reproduced in such living color that no human hand, no power of hell, no time, no death, can obliterate it. Turn your steps again and again to Golgotha. Consider to-day as yesterday and the day before, consider to-day and to-morrow and each day the Righteous One, whose love to the unjust slew Him, the Holy One, whose compassion for sinners pierced and mortally wounded Him. Do not let Him in this His most beautiful form escape your eye. Let your eye constantly rest on Him. Keep Him forever in your heart, so that you can no more disengage yourself from Him, even though you would. This place beneath the cross no true Christian ever leaves. Here true Christians all meet together and remain, as it were, cast together with Him and firmly riveted to Him. Love fastens and binds more strongly than iron bolts. Alas! he to whom it is so easy to forget Jesus as He hangs upon the cross, should weep for his cold heart, and regard himself as most miserable, and hasten, *hasten* to the cross, until he gets it planted in his heart as a living plant, which grows and lives, never withering or dying.

Bane and blessing, pain and pleasure,
By the cross are sanctified;
Peace is there that knows no measure,
Joys that through all time abide.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I or I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 1 Cor. 2: 2. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so

as ye have us for an example. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ). Phil. 3: 17. 18.

He who knows the Crucified One in such measure that he forgets all other knowledge and erudition, and desires to know and to be informed of nothing more than of Him, knows Jesus in the same way as Paul knew Him. He has found the heavenly key to all knowledge concerning God, to all the mysteries of the Godhead. For the love of God which gave itself for us upon the cross, opens everything which otherwise would have remained hidden from us forever. This knowledge of the Crucified One is, however, not a common, ordinary knowledge; not such knowledge as one gleans from a newspaper article, when a matter is presented in a credible way. This knowledge is a living knowledge that permeates spirit, soul and body; a knowledge that lays hold of and sanctifies the whole man. For Paul says, even weeping, concerning some of the Philippians, who certainly also knew Jesus, the Crucified One; who gloried in this knowledge and trusted in it, "They walk as the enemies of the cross of Christ; their end is destruction." Why? Because notwithstanding all that they knew of the Crucified One, they yet had their "belly" as their god, and gloried in their "shame." Therefore the knowledge of and the faith in the Crucified One must have such an effect upon your heart that He, the Crucified One, becomes your God and Lord; that you worship Him and not your belly; that you no longer serve the world, sin, or the flesh, but the living God. Love begets love. If you know that Christ has sacrified Himself for you, you ought also to sacrifice yourself for Him. If He loved you unto the death on the cross, and if you know and believe in this love, how can your heart be without sacrificing love to Him? Can you now truthfully say, I know nothing save Jesus, the Crucified One? Woe to you if your tongue only says this while your mind and conduct show you to be an enemy of the cross of Christ.

Truly blessed is this station,
Low before His cross to lie,
While I see Divine compassion
Beaming in His gracious eye.

Here it is I find my heaven,
While upon the Lamb I gaze;
Love I much? I'm much forgiven,
I'm a miracle of grace.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FOURTENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. — — — Likewise there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Luke 15: 5. 10. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. John 3: 29.

St. John saw the sheep come to the Shepherd, the bride to the Bridegroom. Could he then, as the faithful friend of the Bridegroom, do otherwise than rejoice? Disciples gathered around Jesus. His forerunner and herald to the wedding feast rejoiced therein. When they who were invited, even the maimed, the halt and the blind, hasten from the highways and hedges to the feast; when they come so that the house of the Lord is filled, the true servants rejoice, and they are only sorry for those who remain behind and excuse themselves with their oxen, their wives and their fields. Ought not a teacher to rejoice when his hearers ask for Jesus and endeavor to find Him? The angels rejoice therein. What does it concern them? They love Christ and therefore they cannot be cold and indifferent when He gets His reward, the reward for all the griefs by which He has sought His lost possession. You ask, What does it concern them? You yourself do not rejoice. Oh, let it concern you and be a matter of importance to you, that the Shepherd finds His sheep. Let your voice sound to all the ends and corners of the world, that the bride may hear the voice of the Bridegroom and hasten to Him! All the world, all human souls, are His bride.

Many are still a runaway, vagrant and unfaithful bride! Nevertheless Jesus wants them all. We are to call them to Him. Oh, do not fall asleep before the Bridegroom has recovered possession of all that is His, that Satan may not retain as his prey that which belongs to your Bridegroom.

Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high—
Shall we, to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation, oh, salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till earth's remotest nation
Has learned Messiah's name.

THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Prov. 3: 5. 6.

Must not the Lord, our Savior, complain of many Christians as David complained of his neighbors, "I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind" (Ps. 31: 12)? Yea, many remember Him as little as they remember one who died nineteen hundred years ago, or as one whom they have never known. They say, "In death there is no remembrance of Thee" (Ps. 6: 6). When there is no life of God in the heart, but only death, the heart does not think of its Savior, and cannot think of Him. But where the Lord dwells in the heart, there dwells also the remembrance of Him; there we do not only think of Him—we dwell in Him; there the heart is full of joy in Him; there it beholds His kind countenance; there it perceives His presence, is fascinated thereby, forgets everything else and says to Him, "I held Him and would not let Him go" (Cant. 3: 4). If the morning star be risen in our hearts, it ever beams into the eye in such a way that we can no more forget it. It shines night and day and never sets, if we do not turn our eyes away from it or throw sand into our own eyes; if we keep ourselves unpolluted by things that dim our vision of the star and cloud the hori-

zon of the soul. He whose earnest desire is to be pure in heart and blessed in the Lord, knows also that he cannot be without Him a moment. He dares not take a step without Christ, because he is himself just as little able to go straight and follow the right path as a new-born child. Who is able to suffer without Christ? The more afflictions crowd upon us, the more closely we are to embrace Him. Every cross crushes us and makes us unhappy if He is not in us to strengthen the weak, to raise the fallen, to heal the bruised and comfort the sorrowful. O dear soul, hold Him fast and let not go of Him; for without Jesus all your happiness is gone.

Come, holy Sun of heavenly love,
Send down Thy radiance from above;
And to our inmost hearts convey
The Holy Spirit's cloudless ray.

MONDAY AFTER THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing. — — — The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Ps. 34: 10. 18.

Those who are spiritually rich, full of proud imaginings concerning themselves, are very needy and poor. They suffer want in the spirit of their mind; they are without any living knowledge of the Lord, without His love, even though they may be able to speak much about it. They, however, who feel themselves poor, wretched and in want, who consequently seek nothing in themselves, but all in the Lord, who only seek the Lord, who collect their mind and wait for Him and for His gifts, are ever filled, comforted, enlightened and made happy. They cannot suffer want, because they have Jesus. How does one have Him? How does one get Him? A broken heart and a contrite spirit have Him constantly, as often as they desire. A proud spirit, a puffed-up mind, a satisfied, distracted and thoughtless heart, drives Him farther and farther away, or withdraws from Him. Do you wish to find Jesus? Would you like to have Him ever near you?

Well, then go in the way in which He meets the hearts. Prepare for Him that inn into which He readily enters and remains "a contrite spirit," a "broken heart." But how can I ever be thus contrite and broken? He whose heart is not broken as often as he draws near to God has yet never seen the true appearance of his heart in the mirror of truth. It is an easy matter to cause the heart to be "broken" and the spirit to be "contrite." You need only see your true spiritual condition in the light of God's word, and the heart becomes "broken." This attracts Christ more than all preparations, services, and spiritual exercises. How? All the world knows or may know, where and how Christ is to be found. Yet they are few who possess Him, yea, even few so-called awakened and pious hearts. If we were forced to seek Him far away we would at least have some excuse; but we may have Him in our hearts—O how close!—even in a "broken" heart, not in a richly gifted, but in a "contrite" spirit. And yet! and yet! how far art Thou, Lord Jesus, from the hearts!

In scenes exalted or deprest,
Be Thou our joy, and Thou our rest;
Thy goodness all our hopes shall raise,
Adored through all our changing days.

TUESDAY AFTER THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me. — — — As soon as the woman is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish. John 16: 16. 21. For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. Is. 54: 7.

As the Savior led His disciples, so He leads all His dear ones who cling to Him with their whole heart and suffer themselves unconditionally to be led by Him. They who lead themselves walk their own ways and know not the way of the Lord, the way of peace. The disciples were always happy and as if in heaven, when they saw Jesus and had Him in their midst. When they

lost sight of Him, their hearts were filled with sorrow. Their joy was all the more heightened when they saw Him again after they had regarded Him as dead and lost. Thus Jesus still leads pious and earnest souls. He reveals Himself to them in great mercy; then they feel as if they were in heaven. He withdraws again from their eyes, and they feel as if they were in hell; they are in a state of deepest despair. He comes again, and their heaven becomes still more beautiful and glorious; more beautiful and glorious the oftener He imparts Himself to their heart, reveals His presence and mercy. On the other hand, their hell, their sorrow, their grief, becomes ever greater and more painful the oftener He hides Himself. They are unable to believe that they shall find Him and see Him again. Why do they not believe? Has He not said, "A little while, and ye shall see me and rejoice"? The poor soul believes and hopes this, but not in such a living and cheerful way that it does not feel grieved at His seeming absence. This grief it must feel, like the throes at the birth of higher joys which are prepared for it. Throes and grief must go before and accompany every birth. Then, should not the soul in which Christ, the best, the only true life, is to be born, feel the throes at this most joyful and blessed birth? The Crucified One can not be planted in your heart without the cross. The Man of sorrows can not become yours without sorrow.

My Jesus, as Thou wilt!
Though seen through many a tear,
Let not my star of hope
Grow dim or disappear:
Since Thou on earth hast wept
And sorrowed oft alone,
If I must weep with Thee,
My Lord, Thy will be done!

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For God has not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thes. 5: 9. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren

beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 2 Thes. 2: 13.

Salvation, salvation! God has intended "salvation" for us from the beginning. Who is able sufficiently to thank Him therefor? Wherein does this "salvation" consist? Not in a mere imagination. Our Savior explains to us (Mat. 5: 3—11) wherein true salvation consists. With this genuine and infallible touch-stone we are to prove our salvation. It is singular that the Savior attributes the salvation of God's children on earth to something entirely different from the highly praised happiness of the world. Poverty, hunger, sorrow, persecution, a clean heart, are things that make the whole world unhappy; but it is exactly these things that make the children of God blessed. One who is rich can not become blessed in the kingdom of God except he become poor in spirit, except he disengage his heart from all temporal and intellectual riches and as one poor and needy turns to Jesus to become a partaker of the unsearchable riches of His grace. One who is satiated and happy in riotous living, can not become blessed in God except he deny all his licentiousness, and hunger and thirst after that righteousness which God through Jesus Christ holds out to him in faith. A frivolous, thoughtless sinner can not be saved unless he mourn his riotous life and seek joy and peace in Christ. A licentious person, whose mind is filled with all kinds of lust can not be saved except he banish all impure desires, which he seeks to gratify, lust, revenge or other sensual indulgences, and seek his sole pleasure in Christ and in communion with Him. Unto this "salvation" we are called. This "salvation" belongs only to spiritual poverty, to hunger after righteousness, to a heart that has died from sin. It is only to be found by clinging to the Lord in faith. He is the author of our salvation. He became poor, that we might become rich through His poverty. He hungered and thirsted that we might become filled. Instead of the heavenly joy at his disposal, He suffered the cross, that we through His grief might obtain salvation.

Come, ye that love the Lord,
And let your joys be known;
Join in the song with sweet accord,
While ye surround His throne.
Let those refuse to sing
Who never knew our God;
But servants of the heavenly King
May speak their joys abroad.

THURSDAY AFTER THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Yea, he loved the people. Deut. 33: 3. **Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression? — — — Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.** Mic. 7: 18. 19. **Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. — — — By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.** Is. 53: 10. 11.

The most incomprehensible and adorable wonder of all wonders is the love of God in Christ, to which we should ever come back, at which we each day should stop, and which should each day become new to us. Even Moses exclaimed, "The Lord loveth His people, who have by no means deserved it." He knew the stiff-necked people and saw how highly God loved them. But if Moses had also seen the Son of God hanging on the cross, wounded and bloody, bruised, tortured, yea, as it were, crushed by God Himself,—what would he have thought and felt? It jars on the refined and sensitive ears of our contemporaries when Scripture says that the Lord has stricken and tortured His Son. But I can not help them. To me it seems delightful, however unfathomable, that God bruised the Righteous One for those who were unrighteous, and not only afflicted Him, but that He should justify many, that He might see of the travail of His soul, that He might be satisfied, that He might be given a portion among the great, that we might all become His. God brought such a great sacrifice that He treated Him who was most pleasing to Him, in wrath, in order to win those who hated Him and who had deserved His wrath, and to deliver them from judgment and wrath. Let us not try to fathom this wonder of love; for we are unable

to do it; but let us enjoy it, which we may by the grace of God.

Mark the sacrifice appointed!
See who bears the awful load;
'Tis the Word, the Lord's Anointed,
Son of Man and Son of God.

Here we have a firm foundation;
Here the refuge of the lost;
Christ's the Rock of our salvation:
His the name of which we boast.

FRIDAY AFTER THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Job 32: 8. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Eph. 4: 30. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Rom. 8: 9.

No person is more spiritless than he who is proud. To those only who are humble does God give His grace and Spirit. He resists the proud, for they have the spirit of Satan. Be filled with the Holy Spirit, then, means, Become really humble, bow down before God in your hearts. Then will He also stoop to you and fill you with His Spirit. This is the mystery of all mysteries. It is known by the simple but hidden from the proud. These are without Spirit, consequently without true enlightenment. They never learn, even though they are always at it, the things that belong to their peace. He who possesses the Holy Spirit must take care to retain the Spirit in the same way as he received Him. The higher God by this great gift has exalted him above others, the lower ought he to bow down to others. Nothing grieves the Spirit so much and nothing drives Him away so easily as self-importance and self-exaltation, the refusal to heed His voice and to follow His guidance. One easily sinks from th Spirit down to the flesh again if one does not with faithfulness and humility walk in the Spirit. Ye children of God, who are led by the Spirit, because ye have Him abiding in you, O preserve

this incomparable blessing! The world can cause you no greater harm than when you permit the Spirit to be "quenched" in you. Pray incessantly for the Holy Spirit! Remain in fellowship with Him, and allow yourselves as children to be led, reprimanded, enlightened, comforted and preserved by Him.

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quick'ning powers;
Come, shed abroad a Savior's love,
And that shall kindle ours.

SATURDAY AFTER THE FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I have set the Lord always before me; because he is my right hand, I shall not be moved. Ps. 16: 8. He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. — — — A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. James 1: 6. 8. Do all things without murmurings and disputings. Phil. 2: 14.

Doubt is poison, plague and death to faith. Doubt and vacillation come from an unstable, fickle mind that readily doubts, not because it is tempted, but because it does not love the truth, and affects the doubts. When doubts are only temptations and come often, they are not to be regarded otherwise than mosquitoes to be brushed away. When, on the other hand, the heart itself seeks and voluntarily nourishes doubts, there is an end of faith. Such a person needs a thorough conversion and change of mind. He must begin from the beginning again and pray for a new heart. If the doubts are temptations from Satan to take away your courage by a hundred scruples, pointing to the future and only showing the despondent heart its weakness and the dangers, but not the power and grace of God, then nothing more is needed than that you turn your eye away from the liar and to the word of God, which inspires you with courage and comfort, promises strength to the weak and increases the power of those who have no strength. Confidence in Him, whose strength is made perfect in weakness, is the shield by which we may overcome all temptations to despondency. A look at the Crucified

One, who has suffered for us, drawn us to Himself, who has so far shown us so much grace; a look in faith at the faithful Shepherd, who carries His sheep, who strengthens the sick and binds up the broken-hearted, makes one courageous and fearless, and all doubts must vanish. He who began the good work of redemption and sanctification in you, will also finish it. He has seen beforehand who you are, and how weak you are, and has nevertheless begun. It is not your weakness that hinders Him from saving you; only your own will and your unbelief can hinder Him from doing it, inasmuch as you do not earnestly desire to be saved; you do not absolutely trust in Him; you do not surrender to Him unconditionally; you are not willing to belong to Him without reservation.

The hosts of God encamped around
The dwellings of the just;
Deliverance He affords to all
Who in His succor trust.

THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him. Luke 20: 38. **Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them** Rev. 14: 13.

Thus speak the Scriptures to us in regard to those who are dead. What better consolation could they give us? We do not, perhaps, in reality weep for the dead who live in the Lord, but for ourselves who are left in this life of death. For it would be foolish for you who still must bear the burden and the heat of the day to weep for him who has finished his day's work and who rests from his labors and is at home with the Lord, where no heat shall fall upon him, where no sun shall strike him, where every tear has been wiped away for ever. It is not right to call them "dead." They live; but we are still in this body of death. They live unto their God, and their God now lives wholly in them. For He is a God of the living who can and will preserve living forever those whom He takes to Himself. The thought

of the departed ones who live with the Lord, ought consequently not kill you nor strike you to the ground; it ought to revive you and to raise you up. It ought not to bow you down into the grave to the decaying tabernacle of the departed one, but it ought to lift you above the grave and decay, to the land of immortality, to the bosom of the Savior, to the "mansions" of the Father, where they rest, live and are glorious, whence they beckon us and invite us to come where they are, encouraging us to remain faithful to the end, that we may join them and enjoy a like glory with them.

It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed with tears,
And wake in glorious repose
To spend eternal years.

MONDAY AFTER THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph. 2: 8. 9.

Nothing is easier than to be saved. Yet salvation is something which the fewest persons succeed in obtaining. When a person who sits in prison because of debt asks, How am I to pay my debt and be set at liberty? and one says to him, The person to whom you owe the money, is a very kind person; make your want known to him; give him good words; ask him to forgive you all your debt, and he will do so; he will set you at liberty and give you great wealth besides; then the prisoner readily believes it. He will not only willingly do what he has to do, but he will also say, Nothing else? That is nothing. That is easy for me to do. When he has done so and has become free and rich, he will not think in such an insane manner as this, I have obtained my liberty by my own merit; but he will all the days of his life confess, Oh, that kind person has from pure grace and for nothing forgiven me all that I owed him and besides overwhelmed me with gifts. How am I sufficiently to thank him? Thus men think and act in

regard to temporal things; but in regard to spiritual things, to their debt of sin, and to Christ, they know not what to do. That which is the easiest in the world becomes the most difficult, and if they have done it, they regard it as the greatest work and merit, as if they themselves had earned their salvation. Now Paul does not say in the above words that one has nothing to do in order to be saved, but only that one, after being saved, must not ascribe salvation to one's own works and one's own activity. He must not glory in it as something he has earned by his own works. You must certainly do all that you can by the aid of preparatory grace: weep, pray, wait, struggle, in short, you must do all that which the blessed Spirit, who leads you to repentance and faith, teaches you to do. But when you have done all, you must regard it as so small a matter and you must praise yourself so little for it as if you had done nothing whatever, and regard salvation as bestowed upon you, not because of your works, but for nothing and of grace; for that which you have done is His work in you. In this way all is His and nothing is left for you but—grace.

Thy grace first made me feel my sin,
It taught me to believe;
Then, in believing, peace I found,
And now I live, I live.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body. Luke 12: 4. For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Heb. 2: 11. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Eph. 5: 30. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee — — fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee — — — when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned. Is. 43: 1. 2.

What can be likened to love? Christ calls us "friends," "brethren." He says to every one, Thou art mine. He will be "with us" in fire and in water. We are "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." Dear

soul, repeat this seven times, and seventy times seven times, to yourself and rejoice each time more intensely and more heartily therein; draw therefrom all that you are able to draw. What brother will not exert himself for his brethren? What person does not above everything else look to his own members, his own flesh and bones? What should we fear when we have such an exalted Friend and Brother, such a Head? Where is your confidence, your faith, your love for this great yet condescending Brother? But do you really stand in a close, brotherly, friendly and cordial relationship to Him? Is He really that to you which He may be? Do you permit Him to be a brother to you? On His side, nothing is lacking. If you have not experienced that He is your brother, O take pity on yourself and do not miss this unspeakable, great happiness. Do not neglect this invaluable, matchless grace, to have God on high as your friend and brother, to enjoy His brotherly love and His friendliness. Let Him be dearer to you than all your dear ones, the first, greatest and best friend among all your other friends. He wants to give Himself to you. Oh, then, receive Him!

Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down!
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion.
Pure, unbounded love Thou art,
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart!

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The parents brought the child Jesus into the temple — — — and they went every year up to Jerusalem. Luke 2: 27. 41. And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them. — — — He said, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Mark 10: 13. 14.

The beautiful example of the parents of Jesus, bringing Jesus as a child into the temple, taking the boy with them to Jerusalem at the time of the festivals; the

example of the pious mothers, who brought their children to Jesus, that He might "put His hands upon them and bless them," is a real hand-book and house-book for parents in regard to the training of their children. From that they will be able to learn all that they are to do in order to make their children good and pleasing to God. Bring them to Jesus. Bring them into the temple of truth and love. Sacrifice them to God. Lift them with prayer and supplication up to the heart of the Savior. He will press them to His heart. Pious parents caused Him no greater joy than when they brought their children to Him that He might bless them. As it was then, so it is even now. He is the same. That we do not see Him, makes no difference. The children's Friend lives and blesses unseen as well as when He was seen. His joy is still just as great when you, dear mother, and you, dear father, bring your child to Him in prayer, lay it up to His heart and say, Now He is blessing our child; now He puts His pierced hands upon it; now He presses it to His loving bosom; now blessing and peace, spirit and life from His fulness, flow into our little child's soul. Behold, thus it is done to you according to your faith. Your children are and remain blessed if you do not lack in admonitions, in guidance, and in teaching that which is good. The Savior has appointed the children to the kingdom of heaven and promised it to them, saying, "Of such is the kingdom of God." Parents ought to think of this, namely, that they have in their children citizens of the kingdom of God, over which they are to watch as the angels of God that they may not rob them of heaven and deliver them up to hell. The disciples unkindly turned the mothers with their children away and would not let them come to Jesus—a picture of the present age, which will not allow the children to come to God, to Christ. One says, They do not understand: it is too early. No, says Jesus, they are to "come unto me; forbid them not." Between them and me there is above all a close fellowship; I am come from heaven, and the kingdom of heaven belongs to them; they are my dearest heavenly

citizens. Blessed are the parents who understand this and who act accordingly.

"Permit them to approach," He cries,
"Nor scorn their humble name:
It was to bless such souls as these
The Lord of angels came."

THURSDAY AFTER THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven. Mat. 5: 12.

Thus the Savior comforts us in His word in regard to the afflictions and persecutions of this present time. Verily, if there were no other reward, it would be a great reward even to see Him as He is and be His forever. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12: 11). We shall then see what we had not always here the courage to believe, namely, that "'the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us when we shall see Him face to face." Even a look at Him as He is must change our whole nature and impart to us a heavenly and eternal transfiguration. How happy we shall be when we possess Him and behold Him forever! O ye men, why do ye look so inquisitively around on this earth where you are unable to find the One who alone can gladden your souls forever? Why do you not look in faith up to Him, whose look is able to make you everlastingly satisfied and happy? What great cause have not we who are called unto the heavenly inheritance to rejoice, thinking of our departure when we shall take possession of this inheritance? What great cause have not we for exultation! For the reward is indescribably great, greater than heaven itself. We rejoice intensely when we meet friends whom we have missed a long time or when we meet a man whose acquaintance we have long desired to make. How we shall rejoice when with our eyes we

shall see Him before whom the angels fall upon their faces! What shall we find with Him and in Him? We shall meet all those who deserve to be known and to be loved and in whose company and intercourse the cherubs rejoice. How far away all enemies, temptations and sorrows will be! "In His presence is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. 16: 11).

There we shall see His face,
And never, never sin;
There from the rivers of His grace,
Drink endless pleasures in.
The men of grace have found
Glory begun below:
Celestial fruit on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. Gen. 5: 24. **Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.** Gen. 6: 9. **Moses endured, as seeing him who is invisible.** Heb. 11: 27.

"To walk with God" means to lead a godly life, to walk in the presence of God, in His power and grace, to be in fellowship with Him, to partake of His influence, His nearness, His peace, and to let our heart live therein. Thus lived these progenitors. They were temples of the living God. The Lord was all to their hearts. The love of God was poured out into their hearts by the Holy Ghost. God was in them and they were in God. They were so closely united with Him by the bond of love that nothing on earth could separate them from Him. This is the living faith that holds fast to God, the invisible, as if it saw Him bodily, as if He stood before us. That Christ who was to come was just as near to them in faith as if He had been visibly present. Shall not Christ, who has been on earth visibly, and who remains here invisibly alway even unto the end, be as near to us in faith as if He were visibly present to

us? Yes, certainly; and not that alone, but the spiritual presence of the Lord should be infinitely more real to us than His bodily presence. In our heart He is much closer than if He stood before us physically. He who is not more blessed by faith in Him who is invisible than he would be if he could see the visible Christ, has not such a faith as the Lord would have (John 20: 29).

O Jesus, ever with us stay!
Make all our moments calm and bright;
Chase the dark night of sin away,
Shed o'er the world Thy holy light.

SATURDAY AFTER THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Jer. 31: 3. Let thy lovingkindness and thy truth continually preserve me. Ps. 40: 11. But as for me I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy. Ps. 5: 7.

This is the answer to you when the heart, filled with wonder, asks, How can the Lord love such a wicked, sinful and unworthy being as I? Out of pure mercy, without your merit, says the Lord. I loved you even from the beginning when I saw you in your sins. Before we ever existed, His eyes saw how wicked and ungrateful we would be. Yet He Himself assures us that He loved us in this miserable and abominable condition, and that He in love, mercy, and goodness, has drawn us unto Himself. What kind of goodness is that? How can it love that which is wicked? Ah! it does not love the wickedness which is within us, but the good which it will work in us. It loves to make that which is wicked, good. Hence, if you feel thoroughly wicked and unworthy of His goodness, do not on that account push His blessed hand away, but believe and be fully convinced that His good hand is upon you to make you good, pure and holy, such as, according to His purpose, you shall be. Therefore, do not hinder it by an ill-timed humility. If you love that which is good, then let the good and gracious hand of God make you good,

prepare, strengthen and establish you. Do you wish to remain wicked? You will remain so forever if you do not lay hold of His goodness and permit it to work in you. Rather pray with David (Ps. 5: 8), as quoted above. He also felt himself an unworthy sinner. Resolve just because of your weakness as he resolved, "I will come into Thy house. I will seek Thy presence, Thy face, trusting in the multitude of Thy mercy." "To come into His house" means to enter one's own heart; for He dwells in the heart as His house. He who in spirit and in truth prays there and tarries with Him, shall experience His mercy and truth. There He makes His face to shine upon us.

Into His presence let us haste
To thank Him for His favors past;
To Him address in joyful songs,
The praise that to His name belongs.

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Luke 12: 1. Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocricies, etc. 1 Pet. 2: 1.

The hypocrites say, "We have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves" (Is. 28: 15). What a poor cover, what a poor refuge! For the Lord knows their hypocrisy (Mark 12: 15). Read the eight woes (Mat. 23), which the Savior has pronounced upon the hypocrites and learn that there is no vice which God detests and condemns as much as this most infamous of all vices, which is committed sometimes in a gross and sometimes in a subtle manner. A man likes to seem pious even though he himself admits that he is not pious, and by a sinful life clearly demonstrates to others that he is not pious. Such a man likes to appear to the eyes of others as one who has religion very much at heart. This is the gross hypocrisy. A more artful and subtle hypocrisy is when one flatters himself with the imagination that he is pious and is regarded by others as such. Secretly he lives

in sins which, in order to quiet his conscience, he does not regard as sins, but attributes to human weakness, or covers by a false confidence in God's mercy and the merits of Christ; he passes lightly over them, and counts himself secure. Another kind of hypocrisy is that of those who are possessed by a false zeal; who, driven by passions, persecute others, thinking thereby to render unto God a service and to be zealous for Him, while natural impetuosity and blind rage constitute the real motive for their zealousness. The worst hypocrites are the "false apostles," these children of the devil, who, born by the father of hypocrisy, assume the form of an angel of light only in order to make as many as possible the children of hell (2 Cor. 11: 14). Beware of the subtle as well as of the gross hypocrisy! For "the Lord trieth the hearts and reins, and He delights in uprightness" (Ps. 7: 10; 1 Chron. 27).

O Lord, who triest hearts and reins,
Detesting him who only feigns:
Grant that Thy grace and truth may be
Before Thy throne my only plea.

MONDAY AFTER THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling — — — that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may reoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain. Phil. 2: 12. 15. 16.

Can it be a matter of indifference to teacher, father, or mother, whether their efforts in regard to those who are the objects of their labors, are successful or not? What joy is it not to the gardener when his plants grow, and his trees bear fruit! What joy to the farmer, when his fields, which he has plowed and sown in sweat and labor, give a rich crop! We rejoice, nevertheless, with trembling. One warns those who are the objects of one's labor, as Paul did the Philippians, Beware of

yourselves, tremble because of your weakness and your inclination to security and drowsiness. Do not let this beneficial fear (for servile fear be far from you), this "trembling" called forth by grace, take away your courage, but let it rather incite you to trust all the more firmly in the Lord, who can and will work in you both to will and to do, so that you really become "lights" in the dark world, and, by your pious and blameless conversation, differ from those who are "perverse" as the sun differs from the night. Wherever you stand, in your house, in your family, in the environment and circle in which you live, you are to stand as lights on the candlestick, you are to let your light so shine that it catches the eyes of dark and blind unbelief, so that men ask, Where does this light come from? Then you point to Him who is your light and who "lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Hold forth the word of life; then you shall live and shine. Where there is life in the heart, there is light,—it breaks forth and shines. But where only the dead word lies in the head and hangs upon the lips there is no light of life, no warmth of life, only death and darkness; there is no edification, no growth, no working out of one's salvation. Such Christians had better, with "fear and trembling," begin to seek and to work out their own salvation.

I want a true regard,
A single steady aim,
Unmoved by threatening or reward,
To Thee and Thy great name:
A zealous, just concern
For Thine immortal praise;
A pure desire that all may learn
And glorify Thy grace.

TUESDAY AFTER THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

How unsearchable are God's judgments, and his ways past finding out! Rom. 11: 33. I am the Lord and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things. Is. 45: 6. 7.

Wonderfully, yea, very wonderfully, and yet blessedly and gloriously, the Lord leads His own. No way is like unto the way of the Lord. No matter how full the way may be with thorns that often pierce the soles of the feet to bleeding, and you cry out with pain, yet His way has something attractive about it which you would not trade away for all the happiness and riches in the world. He lets the world walk in its merry way. Those who are His own He throws sometimes into the water, sometimes into the fire; leads and lifts them now above the mountains and again casts them down into the abyss, from which no rescue seems possible. Now He surrounds them with honor and glory as Jesus did on Mount Tabor; then He covers them with disgrace and ridicule, so that even a dog will not look at them, and the worst criminal seems to be more honorable than such a bosom child of God. Their heart is often so filled with Him that heaven seems to have descended to them, but afterward they are forsaken and depressed as if all the spirits of hell had taken up their abode in them. Often they believe themselves to be standing in sunshine. Then again they walk in Egyptian darkness. Now they have Omnipotence in their hands. At another time they are so bound and paralyzed that they are unable to lift a straw, yea, not even able to stand upright. Why? The answer is as above quoted in Is. 45: 6. 7. God be praised! If only He lead you, then care not how it is done; care only by whom it is done. Say with David, "For Thy name's sake, lead me and guide me" (Ps. 31: 3). Let the way lead wherever it may, if only His hand guides us.

So long Thy power has blessed,
Sure it still will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 13: 14. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Gal. 2: 20; 1 Cor. 15: 31; Phil. 3.

If we did not receive a new garment, we should perish in the old garment of sin and mortality. But such a new garment is given to us by God and offered to us through the Gospel. It is handed to us and put on us when we stretch out our hands for it; readily put off the old garment and willingly let go of it. On the other hand, he who loves the old man with the lusts and desires so highly that he will not separate from it, can have no part in the new man which is Christ. Paul says (Gal. 3: 27), "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." Yet he says (Rom. 13: 14), to all who are already baptized, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Is it, then, necessary to put on that which we have already put on? Yes, certainly; because we often put off that which in the first zeal we have put on; and because we have not yet put Christ on in such an inseparable manner that we continually remain in Him. He who remains in Christ need not continually put Him on anew. All that he needs is to hold fast to Him, and possess his heart and his thoughts in His peace. Thus says also St. Paul (Gal. 2: 20), "I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless," he says, "I die daily." The putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new man, or the death of the old man, and the life in Christ, is, therefore, something which even the apostles could not so quickly accomplish. Much less, then, dare we regard ourselves as perfect. We must strive daily to die, and daily to live in Jesus. If we saw and clearly understood how little the filthy garment of the old man is becoming to us; how it mars our looks in the eyes of God, we would hate the garment soiled by the flesh; we would hasten to get rid of it to-day rather than to-morrow. If we had a clear idea of the beauty and glory of the new man; if Christ were thoroughly revealed to us; if we believed

that He is given unto us in order that we should put Him on, abide and live in Him, we would not remain so long without Him; we would lay hold of Him and hasten to Him just as one who is naked hastens into the clothes, ashamed at his nakedness.

Lord, I come to Thee for rest!
Take possession of my breast;
There Thy blood-bought right maintain,
And without a rival reign.

THURSDAY AFTER THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Mat. 6. 7. I am weary with my groaning; all the night I make my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears. Ps. 6: 6. My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me. Ps. 42: 3. 4.

There are many who think that prayer consists in using many words; that he who talks a great deal to God about something, the more the better, is praying. Christ says that mere words are not sufficient, that it is heathenish and not Christian to use many words. Are we not to pray without ceasing, in all places? How would Christ have it, since we are not to use words, at least not many? Ask David; he gives an answer in the name of all those who pray truly in the above cited passage (Ps. 6: 6; 42: 4). Isaiah makes it a condition upon which we receive help and power, that we be quiet and trust in God, and not carry on a war of words with Him (Is. 30: 15). Christ Himself—how few words He used in His most ardent prayer, in His deepest agony! He repeated the same words three times. People err in that they believe that prayer is a matter of the tongue and not of the heart. True, the tongue must be in the service of the heart when one is in need of it; but the heart must pray, strive, wait, hope, believe and groan. Tears often express more than words. No doubt the bloody sweat and the tears of the Savior were a

stronger cry in the ears of the Father than His few and short words. Moses, also, cried unto God without opening his mouth (Ex. 14: 15). In the psalms one often hears David cry, and I am inclined to believe that inward crying is to be understood. Still, I shall not have anything against your often crying aloud when you must. Everything in its time. From this we may conclude how prayer-books are to be regarded as well as the prayers that are said according to such books. Yet I will not unconditionally condemn nor prohibit the use of good prayer-books. He who knows how to pray can also use them rightly. But as a rule they are like the handbooks of arithmetic, in which you can at once find everything without trouble, without having to work out the problem, and without knowing how to reckon. Such fellows are in my native country called "lazy dogs."

Heavenly Father, Jesus taught us
Thus to call Thee, in His name;
His enduring merits wrought us
Graciously this childhood's claim.
Then with "Abba, Father!" come we,
Place us wholly in Thy care;
Oh, let naught e'er wrest us from Thee!
Heed and hear Thy children's prayer.

FRIDAY AFTER THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Is. 50: 10. O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold I will lay thy stones with fair colors — — — and great shall be the peace of thy children. Is. 54: 11. 13.

Thus the Lord comforts His sorrowful, persecuted, despised and believing souls here on earth. It is a consolation that comes down from heaven, from the lips of the Savior and through His Spirit; His word does not come empty. Our God does not speak empty words, and does not mock us in our misery. What He promises He most assuredly keeps. There-

fore, if you sit in darkness; if the light of joy and comfort does not shine for you, but you nevertheless love the Lord and obey His voice and all His words are precious and sacred to you, you know from His own mouth that He allows you, yea, commands you, to trust in Him. Just as surely as He lives and has spoken this, so surely will the light of comfort and help again rise for you. Seek Him only, not the comfort, and you shall find both Him and the comfort. For he who possesses Him—what more does he need? Behold, how compasionately He calls you, "Thou afflicted, tossed with tempest." He knows only too well how it goes with His Church, the congregation of His believers, His dear sheep. Alas! they are, it is true, a prey to all the storms of persecution. But He knows it and He sees it, and in return He promises His children great things, things that can not be uttered,—they are to have great peace. Yes, the storms of tribulation bring a peace which those do not know who are not subject to them.

Thou everywhere hast sway,
And all things serve Thy might;
And every act pure blessing is,
Thy path unsullied light.
When Thou arisest, Lord,
What shall Thy work withstand?
When all Thy children want, Thou giv'st,
Who, who shall stay Thy hand?

SATURDAY AFTER THE SEVENTEENH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places. Ps. 18: 32. 33. Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. Ps. 20: 7. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. Ps. 102: 17. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. Ps. 103: 14.

The natural man thinks himself equal to everything; yet he cannot do anything right. All that his hand lays hold of, all that he does, becomes perverted, because his heart and mind are perverted. The pardoned and en-

lightened Christian acknowledges at all times his perfect inability. He trusts therefore not in the chariots and horses of his own strength, but only in the name of the Lord, prays, fights and waits for God, in whom he is able to do all things. For the Lord "girdeth" all those with strength who ask Him for it, and He maketh their way "perfect." Yea, the Lord can thus strengthen and revive even the weakest one who trusts in Him alone; like a hind, he walks courageously in God's ways, hastens over the hills and mountains of tribluations and hardships, and presses forward to the goal. No one who is weak and miserable, who really feels himself weak and miserable, should lose courage; he should only pray diligently and confidently for strength; for the Lord knows our misery and our weakness better than we ourselves do. He knows better than we that we can do nothing, absolutely nothing, without Him, and that we must succumb and perish if He does not help us. As it is His earnest will that we should not perish but be saved and glorified, it is evident that He must help us when we desire help and ask Him to help us. This you must believe fully and firmly; for it is the truth, and this truth makes you strong and your feet like the feet of an hind.

Fear Him, ye saints, and you will then
Have nothing else to fear;
Make you His service your delight,
He'll make your wants His care.

THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven — — — in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thes. 1: 6-8.

Read this whole chapter and study it thoroughly. Here you may see how glorious, how unharmed and transfigured all those are to be in heaven who here have laid stress on sanctification and who therefore have had to suffer dishonor, ridicule and persecution at the hands

of the world. Here you may also see what will happen to those who have ridiculed piety and faith, and persecuted pious men. They will confess who and how they have been. Now they imagine themselves to be wise and enlightened, and grossly abuse the godly and call them fools, fanatics, eccentrics and muddled pates. In eternity they will realize that they themselves have been such that they lost the right way, walked in darkness and have not known the true light. Then they will see those pious ones whom they have reviled and despised, among the children of God, and themselves among the children of the devil and of darkness. They will see how empty, useless and perverted that active life was by which they thought they rendered such important services to the world. Thus the Holy Spirit knows how to predict how the pious and the impious are to fare in the beyond, to the encouragement and strengthening of the former, and to the warning and awakening of the latter, that they might repent and save themselves from this eternal remorse and disgrace. Ye beloved, who suffer ridicule and persecutions for righteousness' sake, be of good cheer and take to heart what is presented to you in this chapter. See to it that you really pursue sanctification, and that you truly suffer for righteousness' sake and not for the sake of your own sins. He who suffers for the sake of that which is good, may be undismayed. His joy and glory shall soon become great and eternal.

When temptation sorely presses,
In the day of Satan's power,
In our times of deep distresses,
In each dark and trying hour,
By Thy mercy,
O deliver us, good Lord!

MONDAY AFTER THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Ye that love the Lord, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked. Ps. 97: 10. But I have a few things against thee. Rev. 2: 14. 20. And have no fellowship with the unfruit-

ful works of darkness. Eph. 5: 11. **What communion hath light with darkness?** 2 Cor. 6: 14.

David says, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me" (Ps. 101: 2. 3). How then should the Highest, the Holiest, be willing to dwell in a heart that yet loves sin, that does not forsake everything that is an abomination in His eyes? He who says that he loves the Savior, and does not love what He loves and hate what He hates, is a liar; he has never known Christ. The worldling says, These are only trifles; how can the Lord have aught against us on their account or begrudge them? He is not so strict; He is not so exacting. What a false and wicked thought! You yourself are exacting enough with others, if they transgress against you in a word or by a glance. Mark how God also (Rev. 2: 14. 20) is exacting in regard to trifles; when He discovers anything sinful, no matter how insignificant, in aynone, He at once chastises and tries to better it by sharp threats. That which offends such Majesty and Love as He is, you ought not to call a small matter. And if you regard it as a small matter, insignificant and trivial in your eyes, it is all the worse that you cannot sacrifice such a trivial matter for Him. How are you to be able to give up great things when you can not master small things? The eye that shall see clearly and remain sound can not endure a particle of dust in it. The fire wants to be wholly pure; it consumes everything that comes near it. The light endures no spots, no darkness; it must be perfectly pure.

Grant that our days, while life shall last,
In purest holiness be passed;
Our minds so rule and strengthen
That they may rise o'er things of earth,
The hopes and joys that here have birth;
And if our course Thou lengthen,
Keep Thou pure, Lord, from offenses,
Heart and senses; Blessed Spirit,
Bid us thus true life inherit.

TUESDAY AFTER THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Jer. 10: 23. My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Ex. 33: 14. O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me. Ps. 43: 3.

The ungodly think not of the providence of God. They believe that they do as they please. Man proposes, God disposes. Man intends evil in what he does; but God overrules it to good for those who trust in Him. God does not impair man's liberty; but he does not allow men to accomplish the intention and the object of their evil designs and deeds, if these do not serve for the good of His kingdom. Man wants to act in liberty, but the execution and accomplishment are not left to his power and liberty. God can hinder it or further it according to His own good pleasure. But the godly man never desires to lead and guide himself. He is not to take a single step without being led by the presence of the Lord, as Moses (Ex. 33: 22), without praying as David, "O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me." He who does not in all his works seek the presence of the Lord, as Moses did, walks about in the wilderness of this world without finding the way to the land of peace. He who does not in all his undertakings pray for light and the knowledge of the will of God, will certainly not succeed, or, if his plans succeed, it will not be to good fortune, but to his own destruction. He ascribes success to himself, becomes proud, and exalts himself because of it; it would have been better for him if he had never succeeded. The Lord has promised to guide us with His eye and teach us His will. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them" (Jer. 31: 9). Behold, here you have His word. When you are in a great dilemma or in dire straits, when you know not what to do, then weep before the Lord. Tell Him with tears of your distress, that He may guide you; for He has promised to do so.

While I am a pilgrim here,
Let Thy love my spirit cheer:
As my guide, my sword, my friend,
Lead me to my journey's end.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me — — — my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. — — — How are they brought into desolation as in a moment! Ps. 73: 1-4. 19.

The prosperity of the wicked is to many, even to upright souls, the stumbling-block over which some come very near stumbling, and some actually fall, in that they have not patience enough to wait for the outcome. Read the whole psalm thoughtfully and see how true every word of it is. God does actually permit the ungodly, the unbelievers and the unrighteous, to prosper as if He were their friend and protector, while, on the other hand, the godly must suffer and be oppressed as if God were their enemy and opponent. Lo, this is the old story. Asaph and all the pious of former times knew of it and spoke about it. Thus it was thousands of years ago, thus it is at the present time, and thus it will continue to be as long as this world is in its present condition. When, therefore, you reject and despise godliness and faith in God and in Christ, or, perhaps, even fear it, because the believers do not prosper as the ungodly do, then you reject and condemn the saints and the righteous men of all times, the elect and well-beloved of God. They were all, *all* tried by much tribulation. But their end was glorious. Beyond they shine as the sun, and the Most High is their reward. How about the ungodly who are happy here? Their end is terrible, their lot will be terrible throughout all eternity. Would you, then, not rather suffer a short time with the righteous and thereupon be forever glorious? Or will you forget God, revel and carouse, and thereupon be cast into hell? Say rather, "I will be continually with Thee. Whom have I in heaven but Thee?" (Ps. 73: 23).

O make but trial of His love:
Experience will decide
How blest are they, and only they,
Who in His truth confide.

THURSDAY AFTER THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Fear not, neither be thou dismayed. Josh. 8: 1. And he shall judge the world in rightousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. Ps. 9: 8. Great is our Lord and of great power: his understanding is infinite. Ps. 147: 5. The daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of thy judgments, O Lord. Ps. 97: 8.

He who fears has forgotten that God is with him, that God directs all things, that not a hair can fall from his head without the will of the Father. Fear has its origin in ignorance or in forgetfulness of God, of the Savior, who has promised to be with us alway, even unto the end of the world. He who knows Jesus and believes in Him, who knows and believes in His divine attributes, His wisdom, His omnipotence, His love, His patience, and His omnipresence; who never forgets that he has an almighty, all-wise, all-good and merciful God and Savior at his side, who hears him before he cries, and who has assured us that He Himself will dwell in us,—cannot fear, no matter how matters turn, though it seems that God does not exist, that no God of wisdom and of love rules the world. He rules nevertheless; but His thoughts and ways are not our thoughts and ways. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Is. 55: 8. 9). Faith which lays hold of and holds fast that omnipotence and love that is ever near him, stands without fear and terror. Faith is full of praise and adoration, and rejoices in the most wise and loving reign of God. If faith is unable to comprehend how He reigns—as God seemed to David, and has ever seemed to all the friends of God, incomprehensible, nevertheless adorable,—yet faith rests trustingly in the arms of that Father, whose love governs all things righteously and wonderfully.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

FRIDAY AFTER THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever. Dan. 7: 18. Cfr. Rev. 2: 10.

The saints who consecrate themselves wholly to the Lord, who have put on Christ, God's salvation and God's righteousness, who walk in Him, and are preserved blameless unto His day, shall receive His kingdom and possess it for ever. Those who together with Paul "fight the good fight, finish the course, and keep the faith," shall receive a glorious kingdom and a beautiful crown, the crown of righteousness, which the hand of the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give them (2 Tim. 4: 7. 8). O thou beautiful crown! O thou glorious kingdom! He who never lost sight of thee, to him would none of the sufferings of this present time be so hard that he would not gladly bear them, to him would no joy, no honor, no wealth in this world, be so attractive that he would not gladly renounce it. To him the way unto thee would not be too steep, too rough, too hard. On the wings of love and longing he would soar above all things; he would have his heart where thou, thou beautiful crown, thou glorious kingdom, art. He would forget that which is here below and only think of that which beckons to him from the other side. Beloved, let us not forget that which awaits us with the Lord. It is great; it is beautiful; it is glorious. Compared with that, all that we do and suffer is not worth mentioning. Let us do still more; suffer still more. It is all, taken together, nothing compared with the crown.

What though the tempests rage?
Heaven is my home;
Short is my pilgrimage,
Heaven is my home.

And Time's wild wintry blast
Soon shall be overpast,
I shall reach home at last;
Heaven is my home.

SATURDAY AFTER THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Ps. 143: 6. Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. Ps. 86: 4.

Thus it is written in the hearts of the pious; thus a thousand times cries every soul that loves the Lord; thus cries its whole being, without words, without any outward sound, to the invisible, yet ever-present God. He who has tasted how good He is, can no more live without Him. There is a constant longing and yearning, hunger and thirst for Him in the depths of his soul, that sometimes becomes audible and breaks forth in such psalms as David, Asaph, and other friends of the living God, have sung. Whatever they find in the world, whatever is presented to them, has no attraction for them. They have no such taste for anything else as they have for Him. They have, as some one has said, but one passion, and that is Him, only Him. Now the Lord gives Himself to them to be enjoyed by them, and they drink of the streams of eternal life that issue forth out of God's paradise. Then He hides Himself from them, and O, they are as if cast down from heaven to hell; they feel this trial as the most intense, most scorching fire of purification, which nevertheless only calls forth a still more burning thirst for Him, and the soul longs for Him all the more deeply, and seeks His face with all the more glowing desire. They hold fast to Him in faith and do not let go of Him, no matter how He deals with them. Nothing is able to separate them from Him. Dear soul, how do you stand in regard to God? Are you thus joined together with Him? Are you thus clinging to Him? Does He not deserve it? Do you know of other things that by right you may prefer to Him? Can any love be too great for Him—

do too much for Him? Is there a danger that you cling too much to Him, that you long too much for Him? I doubt it. Pardon my distrust.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
The living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

I will praise thee; for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. Ps. 118: 21. Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again. — — — Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side. Ps. 71: 20. 21.

As long as afflictions, temptations, misfortunes, by which God humbles us, last, it is hard for the poor human heart. The heart discovers neither counsel nor help. Yet, when the heart looks up to Him who directs all things, and without whom nothing can happen to us or meet us; when it recalls how often He has delivered it out of distress, comforted the frightened soul, sent joy after sorrow, and how He always lets great blessings follow upon great afflictions, the heart will, if it endure, at last give thanks for the great gain which the soul has obtained through affliction. Afflictions humble, make the soul little and bowed down; lead to the realization and confession of sin. God gives grace to the humble; but He resists the proud. He must, therefore, first curb our pride, our arrogance, that He may show grace to those who are humbled and raise them up. By affliction He seeks a way to our hearts, when He can not find it because of our pride. Hence He has intended only grace, peace, and glorification, even though He has cast you to the ground, stricken or humbled you. He will make you great and glorious. Therefore He has made you small and insignificant. Will you not permit Him to do so? Will you

prohibit Him from so doing? If so, He can do nothing for you, and you remain a proud fool in that you shun the way that leads to true exaltation.

Lead, kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet! I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

MONDAY AFTER THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Mat. 6: 25. Casting all your care upon God, for he careth for you. 1 Pet. 5: 7. Be careful of nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Phil. 4: 6.

When a child of God is overcome and distressed by worries and thoughts of the future, it has ceased believing in God as its Father and in Jesus as its Savior and Shepherd; it denies by this unbelieving sorrow the faith in God and in Jesus, and is worse than a heathen; for a heathen knows nothing of God and His word and thus he can not believe. O thou miserable soul, awake! Have you forgotten that God is a loving Father to you, and that He cares for you as the most loving and tender father on earth can not care for his child? Have you forgotten that Jesus is your Brother, your Shepherd, and your Savior, who has promised you eternal life, of which He has even now given you by anticipation? Should not He give you what you need here? Have you ceased to believe that He has bought you with His blood? Should He now forsake you because of trivialities? Shall He take His hands that were pierced for you away from you? Look once more into His eyes or into His heart, and you shall see that your High-priest has not yet cast you away, that the hen has

not yet trodden the life out of her chicks, and that the Shepherd has not turned away His sheep. You shall see that as a mother He yet carries you in His bosom. But look upward to Him! Otherwise you cannot see this. Look not only to the earth and earthly things, not only into yourself and round about your environments. Up, up to Him with your heart and mind! He cares and He *must* care for you. He cannot do otherwise. You are His and He will not let go of you.

Even the hour that darkest seemeth
Will His changeless goodness prove;
From the gloom His brightness streameth,
God is wisdom, God is love.

TUESDAY AFTER THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. John 15: 15. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them. — — — Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good. Jer. 32: 40. 41. I will be with him in trouble. Ps. 91: 15.

All the attributes that Sirach and every friend requires in a friend are found in no such high degree in any being in heaven or on earth as in Jesus, the Friend of our hearts and souls. A faithful friend is a strong protection. A true friend can not be valued according to other things. "A true friend is the healing of life; and he is proved in time of need" (Sir. 6: 15—17; 12: 11*). Of whom can all this be said but of Jesus, who just in the time of need is with us; who will deliver us in all need, in the need of death and of sin, when none of our friends are able to help us? In Prov. 18: 24, we read, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." This can not be said so truly of anybody else as of our Friend at the right hand of God. He has sworn friendship and love for us forever; He has pledged Himself not to cease to do us good. It

* This book is apocryphal, and not found in the Bible.

is His great delight, not only to do us good, but to be and to abide with us. He trusts us with the mysteries of His Father, keeps nothing back of all that which He has heard of His Father, but pours it out into the bosom of His friends. O my friend, be a friend of Jesus, and regard it as the greatest happiness to be able to be a friend of Jesus. The condition is found in John 15: 14. In the 13th verse you read the greatest proof of His friendship for you, so that it would be the meanest sin to doubt if He is your friend, or will be your friend, if you want Him as such. For he who dies for me can not be my enemy; can not withdraw his hand from me, when I want to grasp it. Draw near to the cross and look into the heart of your friend. What do you read there?

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
To them that seek Thee, Thou art good,
To them that find Thee, All in all.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. John 15: 11; 16: 24. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. Ps. 116: 7. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost. Acts 13: 52.

True joy and undisturbed, eternal peace enter the heart of man only when the Holy Ghost takes up His abode therein and the Lord Himself speaks to the heart. The ungodly and the unbelievers, the unconverted and the lukewarm Christians, have no peace and no pure, abiding joy. There is war and disturbance in every heart in which the God of peace does not dwell by faith in Christ. Even the believer has lost peace as soon as he departs from faith or falls into lukewarmness and drowsiness, and does not abide in Jesus but loses Him out of his sight and heart. Come, therefore, all ye hearts that seek peace and joy, come unto Jesus, the Prince of Peace; receive Him by faith lovingly into your hearts. He will build His tabernacle

of peace there, will come in to you, and bring you pure joy. With Him, heaven enters your soul. As long as we live here below, this is a matter of uncertainty. We carry this treasure in a weak vessel of clay and we must be very watchful and faithful, lest we lose it. If the Lord withholds it from us with or without our own fault for a season and for wise purposes, we are not therefore to lose courage, but to enter only the more into our own heart and wait with all the more zeal before His door until He again takes pity on us.

Peace in our hearts, our evil thoughts assuaging,
Peace in Thy Church, where brothers are engaging,
Peace, when the world its busy war is waging,
Send us, O Savior.

THURSDAY AFTER THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Who art thou? John 1: 19. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Rom. 12: 16. 17. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. Gal. 6: 3.

"Who art thou?" the priests and the Pharisees asked of John. They would have done better if they had asked themselves this question. A man should ask himself this question seven times a day; then there would be less conceit and more humility and love among Christians. Who are you? Are you something in your own conceit? If so, then you are not only nothing, which we all are, but you are besides a puffed-up simpleton, deceiving yourself or being deceived. Consider your own self in comparison with the example of Christ and of His followers, the apostles; consider yourself in comparison with the example of the martyrs and other excellent men, and you shall find that you are yet far behind. Consider yourself in comparison with the duties of your state and calling only, and you will surely acknowledge yourself to be a great debtor and transgressor. Those men, especially pious men, know themselves the least, who strive to obtain high things, high knowledge, deep insight and special things that others do not know nor

have any knowledge of. Such persons lose themselves so that they can no longer find the way back to their own self. Beware! Do not look up to the heights. God knows what it is. If you are to see and know, then He will show you more in a moment than you can search out in a hundred years. Do not look upward to the heights; look inward, into your own self. Condescend to those who are humble and of low estate. Keep yourself down in the valley of self-knowledge and self-abasement; then God shall exalt you and reveal to you things that you could never find on the dizzy heights but only in the way of humble faith.

Let me never from Thee stray,
Keep me in the narrow way;
Fill my soul with joy divine,
Keep me, Lord! forever Thine.

FRIDAY AFTER THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work; so am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me. Job 7: 2. 3. Thou makest darkness, and it is night. Ps. 104: 20.

We should have to reject the providence of God in the lives of all the heroes of faith and patience, if we did not follow in their footsteps, if we did not admit that even the most enlightened, believing Christian, must be led into deep darkness and black nights in order to become thoroughly enlightened and experienced. Was not Job a man in whom God was pleased? Was he not guided by the Lord? Listen to what he has to tell you. Hear how he often was in spiritual darkness for several months at a time. No hireling longs so for rest, no servant in the heat of the sun longs so for the shadow, as the soul walking in dark ways longs for light and comfort from the Lord. Mark this saying of Job, "Wearisome nights are appointed to me"—not such nights as the vicious, the covetous, the careworn have, who are troubled and kept awake by the superfluous sorrows of greed

or unbelief, by lust and revengefulness. No, the wearisomeness of these nights consisted in inward struggles against that spiritual darkness in which the Lord hides Himself with His light and leaves the soul to itself until it breaks forth in sighs and presses through in prayer and supplication, and the clearly beaming face of the Lord again shines upon it. David says that the Lord makes this darkness, this night. He gives and withdraws the light for certain reasons. He makes darkness and light in the soul, that it may know where to turn in order to obtain light. Lord, make Thy face to shine upon us and we shall be saved.

To mine His Spirit speaketh
Sweet words of soothing power,
How God to him that seeketh
For rest, hath rest in store—
How God Himself prepareth
My heritage and lot,
And though my body weareth,
My heaven shall fail me not.

SATURDAY AFTER THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Rev. 2: 10. Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Rev. 3: 11.

To be "faithful" is something that brings gain to ourselves only and by which God gains nothing; and yet He promises us a crown if we are faithful. There are very few who care for this crown. Besides, to be faithful is impossible for us unless He Himself works it in us; and yet He crowns our faithfulness as if it were a work we had done ourselves. Thus faithful and merciful is the Lord. Does He not deserve our faithfulness? He has Himself been faithful even unto the death on the cross; then it is nothing too much that He demands faithfulness in us, a faithfulness that brings us the crown. But thou unfaithful heart that daily breakest faith and trust,—whence wilt thou obtain faithfulness unto death? From Him who grants all grace

and virtue, the faithful God, who has promised me all things, and who, because of his faithfulness and truthfulness daily, yea, a thousand times a day, if I need it, gives it to me without upbraiding; He who has made all His faithful servants and all His faithful handmaids who have ever lived faithful unto the end; He who remains faithful even though we become unfaithful; He who much less can forget and forsake us than can a mother her child, a hen her chicks. If the confidence and zeal dwell in your breast to pray to the Lord as often as you are in need, you will hold that fast which you have and not leave your crown to anyone else. Keep your crown which your Savior suffered so much to procure for you, and which you must not ascribe to your own faithfulness, but solely to His grace. He will give it to you. O thou crown in the hand of our Mediator! Shine often before our eyes in such a way that we lay hold of thee, hold thee fast and not let thee go. Lord! strengthen those who are weak.

Why should I shrink from pain and woe,
Or feel at death dismay?
I've Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day.

THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Follow me. And he arose and followed him. Mat. 9: 9. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. John 10: 27. Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. 1 Cor. 4: 16; 11: 1.

How can he who has received grace, quickening grace from Christ, who is really awakened out of his sinful stupor, remain lying and not arise and follow Him who has awakened him and constantly cries, "Follow me! Follow me! How shall he who is truly awakened do otherwise than follow Christ? Can he be called a sheep of Christ if he does not look to Christ, hear His voice and follow Him? Jesus called Matthew and the other disciples; they arose and followed Him, not on foot only, but also in the spirit, in

mind and in conduct. They observed how He thought and spoke and acted, and conformed themselves to Him. Whom else would you follow than Christ? Whom else would you be like than Him? Would you follow Paul? Very well. Behold, he follows Christ. If Christ visibly associated with you, would you not then closely observe all His ways and manners? Would you not do everything according to what you saw Him do? Well, then, observe Him thus in the spirit. Look into His book, into His life, and He shall show you how you are to think in regard to all things; how you are in all things to speak and act, in order to be perfectly like Him. If you do not follow Christ, you have never received any grace of Him, or else you have thrown away both the grace and Christ; you are not a sheep of Christ, but a child of the world and barred from the citizenship of Israel.

Show me what I have to do,
Every hour my strength renew;
Let me live a life of faith,
Let me die Thy people's death.

MONDAY AFTER THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! Deut. 33: 29. **Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.** Ps. 33: 12. **Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee. Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.** Ps. 84: 5. 12.

If Moses called the people of Israel "blessed," because the Lord took up their cause in their wars against other nations and overcame their enemies, how much more ought not we to call ourselves and all those blessed who together with us believe in Jesus, love Him, and carry His saving grace and love in our hearts, have the forgiveness of sins, Spirit and life in Him, that we might serve Him in a living hope of eternal life! Yea, blessed art thou, O people, who art saved in the Lord—whose Lord and God is Jesus Christ. Blessed art thou, O people, that thy strength is in Him, that thou trustest

in Him alone, that thou buildest upon His merits and His grace alone. He shall be the shield of thy help and the sword of thy excellency. If you cling to Him alone, and love Him with all your soul, you shall by a living faith in Him as with a shield avoid all the fiery darts of Satan; you shall with His living word as a two-edged sword defeat all the enemeies of your soul, conquer in all spiritual wars, and win the crown of life. Blessed art thou, God's Israel, who is like unto thee? Where is there a people with such a King, such a Head, such rights, such treasures and wealth, such hopes and such outlook as to eternity? Thy King is with thee, and in thee; He is thine, and all things are thine with Him.

In our weakness and distress,
Rock of strength! be Thou our stay:
In the pathless wilderness,
Be our true and living way.

TUESDAY AFTER THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Is. 49: 14-16. The Lord hath been mindful of us; he will bless us. Ps. 115: 12. Who remembered us in our low estate. Ps. 136: 23.

Who has ever assured us thus of his love and faithfulness? Who has ever reprimanded us thus for our mistrust? Where is there a love like unto His love? Motherly love is but a shadow as compared with His love. His wounded hands and feet; His pierced heart in which our names are written, are proofs thereof, proofs that never could be more convincing. If we would only heed them more as He urges us to do, it would be impossible for us a single moment, even in the greatest heart-sorrow, to doubt His love. But our intent gaze at the visible, at the shell of things, at the outward appearance, hides the flaming writing of His love from us. Look up to the "hills"! Up to Golgotha!

There you see how deeply you are written on His heart, who does not forget the sparrow on the roof or the young ravens in the nest. How should He be able to forget you, O ye of little faith? God does not send you tribulations in order to smite you to the ground, but to raise you up; not that you should bow the head, but that you should look up to Him from whom such trials come. When anything falls upon your head you look up quickly, to see where it came from, to ascertain who threw it upon your head. Why do you not do the same when the Lord sends a cross down to you from heaven? How wrongly you act in regard to visitations and afflictions that God sends you, thinking that the Lord has now forgotten you! Quite the contrary. It should be to you a proof that God is mindful of you, that He has visited you, that He has entered in to you, that He loves you, and that He chooses you in the furnace of affliction in order that you may look up to Him.

Abide with us, our Savior,
Sustain us by Thy word;
That we with all Thy people
To life may be restored.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Phil. 4: 13. **The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.** 2 Cor. 10: 4. **By my God have I leaped over a wall.** 2 Sam. 22: 30.

Thus spoke and acted the soldiers and heroes of Christ, who trusted in God. They knew their own weakness better than all who excuse themselves with their weakness and make it a cloak for their cowardice and fear in battle. If you know that you are weak, that the enemy is mighty, and that you are threatened, then seek help and strength, that you may overcome him; otherwise you will become your enemy's slave. Satan, sin and the world, this triple enemy, will not cease to attack you because you are weak and entrench yourself behind the excuse of weakness. He is sure of the victory when he finds you alone, hence he dares to attack you.

If you, on the other hand, are in Christ and Christ is in you, then let a thousand armies from hell, all the temptations of the flesh, all enticements and threats from a million worlds storm upon you; let them build a towering bulwark of the most seductive art of persuasion against you, yet you shall conquer them. They shall be unable to accomplish anything against you. Our fight is mighty through God when we are in God and God in us. Without Him we are terribly weak and certainly soon lost. Strive, therefore, to abide in Jesus, your God and Savior. Do not dare to take a single step without Him.

With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the valiant One
Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this?
Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord
And there's none other God,
He holds the field forever.

THURSDAY AFTER THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

He spake and it was done. Ps. 33: 9. For I am the Lord: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall no more be prolonged. Ezek. 12: 25.

If you trust in the Lord, you can rest securely in regard to all future things; you can be without a care as to what is going to happen to you. What the Lord has resolved in regard to you, will in due time come to pass; no one is able to hinder it, neither you yourself nor any other human being. Be faithful in all things that are yours and leave all else which is not dependent upon you, wholly to Him who doeth all things well. Where is your faith in God's word? Has He not promised you that He will be your Father and your support and that He will carry you even to hoary hairs? Has He not declared to you that all the hairs upon your head are numbered? That not a single one of them all shall be lost

without His will? That He will interest Himself in a fatherly manner in all things that concern you, and that if you but love Him, He will lead all things to the best for you? Where is your faith in the word of God? Why do you trouble yourself with unnecessary thoughts, by which you can not make a hair black or white? Love Him and do not doubt that He loves you. By your fear and sorrow you accuse Him of falsehood, as if in His word He had promised you what He would not or could not keep. What? Would you make God a liar? Rather say, Has He said it, and He should not do it? Has He spoken, and He should not keep it?

Through this vain world He guides our feet,
And leads us to His heavenly seat.
His mercies ever shall endure,
When this vain world shall be no more.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

David swore unto the Lord, — — — Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house — — — I will not give sleep to mine eyes — — — until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. Ps. 132: 2-5.

Dear David, how zealous you were in finding a place for the Lord! We slumber so peacefully before we have found and built up a place for the Savior of our souls in our heart! The Lord will no longer dwell in temples built with hands (Acts 7: 48); He will now choose our hearts as His temple, as it is written, "Ye are the temples of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (2 Cor. 6: 16). How can you believe this promise if you sleep a single night before you seek and find a place for the Most High in your heart, so that He even to-day may come and take up His abode in you, He, who now stands at the door knocking for admittance that He might sup with you (John 14: 23; Rev. 3: 20)? How can you believe that God to-day will come and dwell in you since you

remain cold and indifferent, and do nothing to receive Him? Let Him have your heart; say to Him, Come in, Thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest Thou without? Verily, you ought not to allow your eyelids any sleep before this precious promise is fulfilled upon you. If it is not so fulfilled, do not say that you have faith, and that you lay God and your salvation to heart.

Grant that all Thy faithful people
May Thy truer temple be;
Neither flesh, nor soul, nor spirit,
Know another Lord than Thee;
But to Thee once dedicated,
Serve Thee everlastingly.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. Ps. 16: 5. 6. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be. — — — But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. Ps. 37: 10. 11.

Rich, happy and excellent is he who has found Jesus. A more beautiful lot can not be the portion of any soul; a richer heritage can not be yours. All that the world esteems great, beautiful and rich, vanishes as shadows compared thereto, and passes away as smoke in the air. But the Lord remains an eternal inheritance to the faithful. He who possesses Him shall not be in need of any good thing, he is enriched in all good things (1 Cor. 1: 4. 5). Hastily does the happiness of the wicked pass away; but those whom they regard as miserable, because they do not put their trust in any visible thing but in that which is invisible; the wretched who feel poor and sinful in themselves and who therefore trust in the riches of the grace of Christ alone, shall inherit the promised land, the rest of peace. Death can not rob them of their heritage; on the contrary, it then becomes their eternal possession. Blessed is he who is not blinded by the seeming good things and imaginary joys of this world; but who looks away from

it all and fixes the eye of faith upon the Lord and sees and finds everything in Him, so that he can say in truth, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. He alone is sufficient for me."

Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
More than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is Thy name,
I am all unrighteousness;
Vile and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace.

THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us. Rom. 8: 17. 18.

If only the first is right, there shall be no lack of aught else. If you are a true child of God, begotten of God, endowed and sealed with His Spirit, led by His Spirit and filled with His love, obedient in a child-like manner to your Father, so that one can not dispute your traits as a child of God, so that the Spirit of God Himself bears witness to that effect, then you are an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ; then there is a glory awaiting you with which all the sufferings of this world can not be compared, of which one would not be worthy even though one suffered the pangs of all the martyrs and the agony of the condemned in hell; a glory which one could not merit by any suffering, not buy at any price, which God bestows upon His children only, who, with all their heart, believe on the Name of His Son, and who, by faith and love, become like unto His image. Comfort yourself with this if, as a child of God, you are persecuted and distressed, if the world hates you because you are not one of its children. Look out into that other world, when this world becomes too narrow for you! The former belongs to you; this one does not. Demand and expect therefore

nothing from the world except free passage to your native land. If your journey be made difficult for you, which as a rule it is, take comfort in the fact that all that happens to you on your journey through this world, will but serve to enhance your glory beyond.

My Father's house on high,
Home of my soul, how near,
At times to faith's foreseeing eye,
Thy golden gates appear!

MONDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we flee away. — — — So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Ps. 90: 10. 12.

The home-coming is more desirable than the pilgrimage; that is self-evident. Who would not rather go home than journey in a strange, unknown and dangerous land? It is not so with all men; there are men enough who do not love home, who would rather roam about in the woods and wade in desert-sands than go home. Why are they so insane? Because they love darkness rather than light, licentiousness more than God; they know that they have nothing good to expect at home. But can not all receive every good thing there? Yes; but they will not come. Then there is nothing to be done for them. "He who will come unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11: 6). They spend their years "as a tale is told" (Ps. 90: 9). They flourish as the grass which is soon withered and dried up. Oh, that they would remember that they are to wither and to be cast away! Ye children of the kingdom, ye have become wise and have long since considered, not that you *must,* but that you *may* go home, that you have permission soon to depart from the body and to be at home with the Lord. You are happy because you love your home, because your hearts are even now

with Him, who beckons to you and says, Come over hither! Here below you have nothing good except the grace of the Lord. Life to you is a burden that would be unbearable if love for the Lord did not ease it. Who does not willingly put down his burden? Who does not long for the evening's rest?

O sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country,
That eager hearts expect!
Jesus, in mercy bring us
To that dear land of rest;
Who art with God the Father,
And Spirit, ever blest.

TUESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt. Josh. 34: 20. If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. 1 Chron. 28: 9. If his (David's) children forsake my law — — — then will I visit their transgressions with the rod. Ps. 89: 30. 31. They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Jer. 2: 13. 17.

He who clings to the Lord is one Spirit with Him; he constantly enjoys everything that his Lord has. Shall he be able to find anything more anywhere else? Possession and enjoyment are not only what he desires; the Lord Himself is more to him than all He possesses, a thousand times more than all the heavens and all the worlds can give. But he who has learned to know the Lord and then forsakes Him, and turns from the fountain of living waters to hew out broken cisterns, that can hold no water, will not go unpunished; God will first visit him with the profitable rod of chastisement, and if this does not cause him to come to himself and return to his Savior, but he continue in his perversion, then the Lord will turn away from him, and do him "hurt," and cast him off for ever. He who has tasted how good the Lord is, and yet departs from Him and seeks salvation elsewhere, in strange gods, has nothing good

to expect; his last state will be worse than his first. God will chastise him more severely, and at last punish him harder than He will punish the blind world that knew not God. Abide, therefore, with the Lord who has redeemed you and called you to His heavenly kingdom. Why should you forsake Him? What have you to complain of in regard to Him? What is it that He has not done right for you? Where will you find a better Lord? The world, the flesh, and the devil are the three tyrants into whose hands you fall, if you depart from Jesus. They give you false promises of a great many beautiful things, but they do not keep their word. They reward you with griefs and disease, disgrace and misery, distress and death, judgment and hell.

Now I have found the firm foundation,
Where evermore my anchor grounds
It lay there ere the world's creation,
Where else, but in my Savior's wounds?
Foundation, which unmoved shall stay,
When earth and heaven pass away.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called. Col. 3: 15. Cause me to hear thy loving kindness in the morning: for in thee do I trust.. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies; for I lift up my soul unto thee. Ps. 27: 11; 143: 8. 10.

Nothing is so important to the Christian who loves the Savior, as in all things to find the will and the ways of the Lord; he will not take a single step against that which pleases God. The approval of the Lord means everything to him; that is the only motive of all his thoughts and deeds. As we are not always able to know the will and pleasure of God, such a loving heart prays without ceasing, that the Lord will teach it His ways and lead it in the plain path of His good pleasure—that it may be governed by Him and by His Spirit. Otherwise we are unable to preserve the peace of God, which makes us certain of His good pleasure, the pledge and seal of

His love. This peace departs from us or diminishes as soon as we leave that which His eternal and holy will prescribes for us. It is impossible that he can possess true peace who walks in his own ways and follows his own will. He deceives himself if he believes that he is enjoying the peace of God. The peace which does not emanate from God is certainly a false peace. Pray, therefore, pray without ceasing, that "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" may conquer in your hearts and keep you in Christ Jesus. If you have lost this peace, confess your sins and seek to regain possession of it through repentance and believing prayer.

Draw us to Thee; enlighten
Our hearts to find Thy way,
That else the tempests frighten,
Or pleasures lure astray.

THURSDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Rev. 2: 4. **For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.** Heb. 3: 14. **To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.** Rev. 2: 7.

There is nothing more delightful than a new-born child of God who remains in his first love. But "he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." He to whom Christ imparts Himself is very ardent in love. If he does not hold fast the beginning of his confidence, the first love, which is the essence and nature of Christ, but allows it to be quenched by security or self-exaltation, then there is nothing more sad than such trees twice dead, such a ruined garden of God. Alas! he who is in possession of the first love ought not for all the world to let himself be robbed of it. He ought rather to suffer everything and to dare everything in order to preserve this costly gem. He who perceives that it decreases, that it will be quenched, let him pray and struggle and seek to revive it and to regain possession of it—let him humbly draw near to the cross of Christ. The tree of the cross is the best

fuel for this fire, the right means by which to revive it and start the flame when it comes near going out. Therefore, do not despair, dear soul, if you have lost the first love. Behold, the Savior does not cast you off on that account, but He presents the fact to you and says, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen; and repent, and do the first works" (Rev. 2: 5). Begin once more from the beginning. Do now as you did in the beginning when you received the first love. He will meet you in the same way. Let this be a matter of importance to you. If it is not, then the candlestick will be removed out of its place; your light will be extinguished, and you will become a child of darkness. But if you let the Savior inspire you with courage; if you have an ear to hear; if you overcome your drowsiness and security, He will give you to eat from the tree of life. Here He will come to your aid with strengthening food, and in heaven you shall be satisfied.

In His name I stand acquitted
While upon the earth I stay:
What I have to Him committed
He will keep until that day.
Be His service my endeavor;
I will leave my Jesus never.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Phil. 2: 5. Take my yoke upon you; and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart. Mat. 11: 29.

Can we call ourselves Christ's disciples and Him our Lord and Master, if we are unwilling to "learn" of Him, to have "the same mind" as He had? He does not demand that we shall learn of Him how to create a world, to walk upon the sea, to raise the dead, to command the storm and the wind, but to be "meek and lowly in heart." If He demanded of us that we should imitate His works of omnipotence, we should have an excuse, although He has also said, "All things are possible for those who believe;" "faith as a mustard seed can remove mountains;" "he who believes in me shall

do greater deeds than I do." Yet if we do not learn this, He will readily forgive us; but meekness and lowliness of heart are essential. "Well," you say, "but this comes harder to our proud and impatient mind than removing mountains, stilling the storms of the sea or raising the dead." If you seek strength to do it in yourself, then you can not do the one thing more than the other; but if you ask Him, you shall not be in need of any good thing. He who gives the commandment, gives the strength also. The meek and humble Jesus will Himself come to you and dwell in your heart, and if He dwells in you,—what is impossible for you to do? We cannot have His mind unless we have Him. On the other hand, he who possesses Christ, possesses His mind also. He who does not possess His mind, has never seen Him, nor has he known Him.

Still to the lowly soul
He doth Himself impart,
And for His temple and His throne
Chooseth the pure in heart.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I am continually with thee. Ps. 73: 23. God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods. Josh. 24: 16. Ah children that are corrupters! they have forsaken the Lord. Is. 1: 4.

When Joshua had led the children of Israel into the promised land, holding the last public gathering, he said among other things to the people, "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth. And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord choose you this day whom ye will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the god of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." And the people answered and said, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord." Joshua pressed them still harder, saying, "Ye cannot serve the Lord, for He is an holy God." And as the people reiterated

their statement, he said, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the Lord. — — Now therefore put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord." Pause here, beloved, and meditate thoroughly upon this whole narrative (Josh. 24), and ask your heart if it be inclined to the Lord, or if it clings to other gods beside the Lord. For this perverse people departed later nearly always from the Lord. A promise is soon given; but we must examine ourselves to see if we have the strength to keep it. We must not promise that which we are unable to perform. We must ask the Lord humbly and with constant zeal to draw our hearts to Himself, to keep it steadfastly with Himself, and to bestow upon us faithfulness and steadfastness to the end. Grand and beautiful is the declaration of Joshua that he, irrespective of what the people would do, freely and loudly confesses himself, together with his whole house, as being on the Lord's side. Thus steadfastly must your heart cling to the Lord whether one or no one share your mind, concur with you or not. Cling with your whole house to the Lord even though the whole world serve strange gods.

Lord, be mine this prize to win:
Guide me through a world of sin;
Keep me by Thy saving grace;
Give me at Thy side a place.
Sun and Shield alike Thou art;
Guide and guard my erring heart.
Grace and glory flow from Thee;
Shower, O shower them, Lord, on me!

THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Rom. 12: 19. Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Heb. 12: 15. Be reconciled to thy brother. — — — Agree with thine adversary quickly. Mat. 5: 24. 25.

He who avenges himself upon his enemy or upon his offender, forestalls God and usurps God's rights. He

has reserved to Himself to recompense every evil and to save (Prov. 20: 22). Therefore give place unto the wrath and judgment of God, Paul means to say; God will judge and repay. But this is not enough for a loving mind: it desires reconciliation; it desires to win the heart of the adversary. It will not itself harbor malice toward others, neither can it suffer anything in others which is against love and concord. It therefore seeks to destroy every bitter root of vengeance, ill-will, and hatred, not in its own heart only, but also in the hearts of others. The Christian readily offers his hand once more; he does not give up until the other party holds out his hand and they once more hand in hand worship and love Him who stretches forth His hands all day to His enemies, who allowed His hands to be pierced for us all and has graven us all upon the palms of His hands. Look into the pierced hand of Jesus; therein you and your enemy are graven; His hand upholds you both; for He upholds all things by the word of His power. Should you then desire to be discordant when the one and same hand is stretched down to you from heaven in order to save you; a hand which some day shall wipe away all tears from our eyes and lift us all up to heaven?

Harbor no hatred nor ill will,
Lest hate breed anger, and thou kill;
Be patient and of gentle mood,
And to thine enemy do good.

MONDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Trust in the Lord and do good, — — — and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee; and the Lord shall keep the righteous, and deliver them. Ps. 37: 3.

He who trusts in the Lord shall not be ashamed. In this song godly men of all times have joined, and it has never yet been found to be false. You would be the first pious man to be forsaken by God, and to make His word a lie. Only cling to Him, and you shall stand

as long as He stands. You will not fall unless He falls. But you do not expect that *that* will happen; you do expect succor, comfort and deliverance. That which God has promised will surely come sometime; it can not forever fail. Everything shall come to an end; hence, also, your distress, your misery, and your complaint. God only and His help, His comfort, never ends, but remains forever. Love never fails. "I have seen an end of all perfection: but Thy commandment is exceeding broad," says David (Ps. 119: 96). "I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry" (Ps. 40: 1). This you also shall confess concerning the Lord, if you wait unto the end. Nothing under the sun shall remain as it is; everything changes. The heavens and the earth shall wax old as a garment; but the Lord your God is unchangeable, and shall remain the same forever (Heb. 1: 11). If your sky be ever so clouded, it shall become clear again when the storm is past. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart. — — — Wait, I say, on the Lord, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land" (Ps. 27: 14; 37: 34).

Lord Jesus, my Salvation,
My Love and Life divine,
My only Consolation,
To Thee I all resign;
For Thou hast dearly bought me
With blood and bitter pain,
Let me, since Thou hast sought me,
Eternal Life obtain.

TUESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness — — — and live. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Is. 55: 2-6. And thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. Is. 58: 11.

The Lord calls the whole world, and the whole world stops its ears. He cries outwardly and He cries inwardly; always and everywhere He finds deaf ears.

He does not call in order to judge and punish. He cries, "Eat that which is good, which I have prepared for you." Men as a rule readily come when they are invited and called to eat. Only "that which is good," which the Lord gives for nothing to all who hunger for it, men care not for; neither will they have it. Listen, dear soul, listen how sadly He calls you and in your heart offers you His good things. Go in to Him; He gives you a food by which your soul will grow and live forever. He promises much, but He gives a great deal more. Elsewhere you find, no matter where you go, scanty food for your poor soul, a food by which it can not be strengthened nor live. It is singular that the Lord does not invite us to prepare, but only to eat "that which is good." He has prepared it for us. Who is not fond of good food? Thus easy does the Savior make it for us. He has prepared everything for our enjoyment. It is even now ready and put on the table without costing us anything: only take and eat it! And this we will not do? The same is also said in the parable of the calling of the guests to the wedding feast (Mat. 22: 4). He caused them to be invited, saying to them, "All things are now ready;" but they would not come. This blessed table is spread and fully prepared in your heart if you enter hungry, you shall be fed and live. Oh! that your soul may become hungry for this excellent food which strengthens heart, soul and body. Such food the Savior has prepared. Oh, that you may come to Him every day and eat your fill in Him! How you should live, and be blessed!

Our Shepherd to His ransomed flock
No needful gift denies,
He leads us to the opened rock,
And manna still supplies.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified. Ps. 70: 4. And your heart shall live that seek God. Ps. 69: 32.

What promises have not all who seek the Lord, who put their trust in Him only! Surrender your hearts wholly and unconditionally, all of you, to the Lord. How He would fill them with joy and blessedness! Who should be glad and magnify God if not they who have God with them—they in whom Christ lives? Who should have God with them, Christ dwelling in them, if not they who seek Him and love Him? His heart inclines at once to every heart that inclines to Him. O ye hearts! what do ye seek beside Him, the Friend of the heart? Your heart can not live, not be blest, if you do not seek Him and turn with the whole heart to Him. Know you not that everywhere else you find nothing but heart-sorrow? Peace and rest for the heart you find in Him alone, who has created your heart and is both willing and able to regenerate it. His kingdom is a kingdom of the heart. He willingly enters into the hearts and blesses them. That is His delight. If you have Him in the heart, you have a fountain of joy within which is inexhaustible. Then what can cause you sorrow? What a heaven such a heart is! What a heaven of heavens when several such hearts meet who have the Lord within! Who shall be able to destroy their joy? On the other hand, how they will be affrighted and fall, who do not possess Him and seek Him! Forever blest is the soul in whom God and Jesus dwell. Blessed, glorious as heaven, is every heart which is in Christ. Wretched, and miserable, and poor, on the other hand, is every soul who lives without God, without Jesus, and without grace.

Dear Savior, draw reluctant hearts;
To Thee let sinners fly,
And take the bliss Thy love imparts,
And drink and never die.

THURSDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Commit thy way unto the Lord; — — — and he shall bring it to pass. Ps. 37: 5. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. Rom. 8: 28.

No affliction, misfortune or misery can hurt you; nothing can cause you harm, if you love God. When your distress has reached its utmost limit; when you lie in the deepest abyss of misery, conceive it to be still worse; even then believe, as surely as you confess an almighty and good God and Savior, that He can help and rescue and cause it all to turn out for the best. No distress can be too great for God; no evil can be so bad that God should not be able and willing to turn it to good. In a heart that loves and trusts God, the first thought in all need and trouble is, God will cause it all to turn out for the best. If you can no longer hope and believe this, then your faith has suffered shipwreck. Make haste to come to the Bible and to prayer and find a plank upon which you can still save yourself and swim to the land of rest and of confidence. The Lord will again establish your faith, and He will undoubtedly also cause this to turn out for the best. The burden you commit to Him will be lifted, and that in such a way that it shall cause you wonder. On the other hand, if you yourself try to turn it to good, or take refuge in men, trusting in them, the end will be worse than the beginning. You will become so confused and entangled that you can no more find a way out. But if you lay hold of the hand of the Lord which can do all things and ever offers itself to you, it shall lift you up above all mountains and shall put this psalm of praise in your mouth, "The Lord is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working."

The Lord is just, a Helper tried,
Mercy is ever at His side;
His kingly crown is holiness,
His sceptre, pity in distress,
The end of all our woe He brings;
Wherefore the earth is glad and sings:
We praise Thee, Savior, now,
Mighty, indeed, art Thou.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched. Is. 66: 24. **And the smoke of their torment**

ascended up for ever and ever. Rev. 14: 11. And they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Rev. 20: 10. To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 2 Pet. 2: 17.

This is not written in the Bible in vain. If it does not concern you, it may concern your brother or neighbor. If you have no cause to fear eternity, and if you do not find it necessary at the thought of eternity to arouse yourself out of sleep and to preserve yourself from the enticements of sin, then remember that thousands of your brethren blindly and incessantly rush toward the terror of eternity, toward the fire that shall not be quenched. As you consider these words of Jesus, instead of sentimentally shortening eternity, as many would do, and letting the fire be quenched, at any rate after a number of years, and letting the worm that Jesus has made everlasting, die sooner, in order thereby sweetly to console yourself and your brethren,—instead of doing this, I say, rouse yourself to prayer and supplication for yourself and your brethren, that God may move, turn, enlighten and save you and them, that you may not enter into torment; for the torment may, nevertheless, be of too long duration, seeing that Abraham said to Dives that there was no way and no door opening from beneath up and that none could leap across the "great gulf fixed." Pray, I repeat, pray, and do all in your power to save yourself and your brethren from destruction. It is better not to fall into this "fire" and not to come near this "worm," even if it were true, as some think, that eternity is not eternal, that the unquenchable fire is quenchable and that the everlasting worm is not everlasting, that Jesus and His disciples have not expressed themselves accurately according to the sentimental taste of our times. Better, I say, is better. Save yourself and your neighbor before the fire begins to burn and the smoke to ascend.

But sinners, filled with guilty fears,
Behold His wrath prevailing,
For they shall rise, and find their tears
And sighs are unavailing;
The day of grace is past and gone;
Trembling they stand before the throne,
All unprepared to meet Him.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The righteous shall go away into life eternal. Mat. 25: 46. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. 2 Cor. 4: 17. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Rom. 5: 2. God will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life. Rom. 2: 6. 7.

As "eternity" is a word of terror to the unbelieving and ungodly, the lukewarm and faithless, so it is a word of joy to the godly, righteous and pardoned, as long as they remain in grace and preserve the gems of faith, love and patience. When the love of your Savior, the eternal joy and crown which He has prepared for you yonder, are so attractive to you that because of these you forget sin, the world and yourself, then you need not think of judgment and hell, eternal punishment and torment. Rejoice in the glory of the children of God. Live in heaven, to which you are called. Let your heart always be filled with the joy which the Lord even here bestows upon His own as a foretaste. If this, however, will not work upon your heart, if it should make you drowsy and secure, then let the thought of the opposite, the unhappy eternal state, of the loss of the presence of God, which shall be the lot of all who are unfaithful, secure and lukewarm, arouse you and renew your delight in an earnest consideration of heaven and the blessed eternal estate. But if heaven be in your heart, none can frighten you with hell. If hell be in your heart, then hasten out of it while there is yet time and seek in Christ, the Redeemer from death and hell, grace and pardon and a living hope of heirship and sonship of God, that you may rejoice when you think of eternity. For he who thinks to help himself by banishing all thoughts of eternity, and who will not think of the blessed eternal state nor of the unhappy eternal state, is, indeed, not much helped thereby. By forgetting eternity you can neither quench hell nor win heaven. Eternity remains eternity, and you must enter into it whether you want to think of it or not.

The day is surely drawing near,
When God's Son, the Anointed,
Shall with great majesty appear,
As Judge of all appointed.
All mirth and laughter then shall cease,
When raging flames on flames increase,
As the apostle teacheth.

THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God: which made heaven, and earth, and all that therein is; which keepeth truth for ever, which executeth judgment for the oppressed. Ps. 146: 3-7; 118: 8. 9.

Let "the God of Jacob" be your God. If Jacob's faith be your faith, then Jacob's God is your God also. Consider the whole history of Jacob, how his faith and confidence in God everywhere delivered him, blessed him, comforted and upheld him. The God of Jacob, who has a ladder that reaches from heaven to earth and from earth to heaven, by which God is accessible to us, by which He is most closely united with us so that our prayers ascend upon it, and His help descends upon it;—Jacob's God who is everywhere near and present, wherever you call upon Him, so that even in the desert and night of affliction, wherever you are, even though forsaken and rejected of men, standing alone in the great wide world, you can find the gate of heaven and the house of God;—Jacob's God, who allows Himself to be overcome by believing struggle and prayer and never sends you away without His blessing,—this God who is able to shield you against your persecutor Esau and to make him obliging and kind to you,—let Him be your God in whom you trust. But do not make men, no matter what name they may have, your gods and helpers; for they cannot, nor will they, help you. God may help through them, but the glory remains His. He deserves all our confidence. To Him our prayer also must be directed. Ought you not to feel ashamed that God, who has created heaven and earth and everything else, is not regarded by you as sufficiently powerful,—

ashamed that you doubt Him as if He could not help you? "With God nothing is impossible." His promises never fail. Can you mention any instance in which He has not promised certain help to those who trust in Him?

O Thou from whom all blessings flow,
Thy peace and comfort now bestow;
Abide with us till life is o'er
And make us Thine forevermore.

MONDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Luke 13: 24. **Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father.** Mat. 7: 21; 13: 14.

These are the Lord's own words which He spoke to His disciples when they asked Him if there be few who are saved. He admonished them to desire and to strive earnestly to be saved. What would He answer if you asked Him, Lord, shall I be saved? Here you read His answer. This is said to you and not to Peter and John only. To you, *to you,* the Lord says, Strive earnestly! For there are many who think that they have heaven in their bosom who shall yet never see it. "They seek to enter in," the Lord says, "and shall not be able." Why? Because they do not seek in the right way. But you say, This is terrible. May it terrify you to your own salvation! The Lord says it that you should not make light of heaven and play with it. You believe in Christ; he who believes in Him shall be saved. But is your faith such that it leads you in the narrow way and through the strait gate, sets you free from the world, from the lusts, and from sin, and prompts you to strive forward and upward? Many seek to enter in; but they seek to enter in by ways of their own, and through gates chosen by themselves, not in the narrow way shown by the Lord, and not through the gate mentioned by Him, that is "strait" and that brushes off everything that clings to them: the world and sin, yea, even one's own

self. Or men seek heaven with much trouble and exertion, but in their own strength, not in living faith in Christ, not in fellowship with Him, not with the heart, but with the head. Or, they take too much with them on the way; they load themselves down with temporal things so that, pressed down by the burden, they are unable to raise themselves up to the heavenly things. For this reason they are not able to reach heaven. Jesus is the way and the gate; he who walks in Him and strives by His help, shall enter in and find pasture.

Lead us all our days and years
In Thy straight and narrow way;
Lead us through this vale of tears
To the land of perfcet day,
Where Thy people, fully blest,
Near Thy throne forever rest.

TUESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. John 10: 14. It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Ps. 100: 3. I have gone astray like a lost sheep: seek thy servant. Ps. 119: 176.

The blessed fellowship that exists between Christ and His sheep is something for which the sheep have to thank Him alone. "All we like sheep have gone astray" (Is. 53: 6; 1 Pet. 2: 25). He has sought us and led us to Himself. But are we all truly with Him? Do we know Him as our Shepherd, who has given His life for us, and bestowed upon us life eternal? Is it for that reason that we hear His voice? Do we follow His beckoning, and walk in His pasture? It is, perhaps, often necessary that He set the dogs at us and thereby drive us together so that we are compelled to flee to Him and seek salvation beneath His shepherd-staff. If we remain in Him, and allow His rod and His staff to govern us, He has no use for the dogs. It is very beautiful to see of what good use the dogs are to a flock of sheep that have scattered and gone far away from the fold: when they hear the barking of the dogs, they run together

quick as a flash, and hasten to the shepherd. The dogs dare not harm any one of the sheep—the shepherd does not allow that; their barking only seems to drive the sheep to the shepherd and the fold. If the sheep be good, and remain with the Lord in the good pastures, the dogs have nothing to do, and the Shepherd does not need them; He keeps them off so that they do not disturb the sheep. Oftentimes a sheep strays from the flock and loses sight of the Shepherd altogether; but when it longs for home and cries, Lord, I am a stray and a lost sheep: seek Thy servant! the Lord wil not hesitate. He has the welfare of each individual sheep at heart. He will soon hear the voice of the crying sheep. He calls the lost ones by day and by night. How He must rejoice when someone cries to Him and longs to come back to Him!

Savior, like a Shepherd lead us,
Much we need Thy tend'rest care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us,
For our use Thy folds prepare;
Blessed Jesus,
Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

He is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. Is. 28: 29. All his works are truth, and his ways judgment. Dan. 4: 37. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary. Ps. 77: 13.

The Lord often leads His children in such narrow ways that they say also, "The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering than that he can wrap himself in it" (Is. 28: 20). Every moment it seems to them that they are unable to endure; but they do endure, nevertheless; for His invisible hand holds them. He also knows the right time and the right measure. He knows when to lead them into affliction and when to lead them out of it, how far He may go, and how much He dare lay upon them. For "the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the

fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen" (Is. 28: 27. 28). In this manner the Lord deals with His loved ones. If He seem to deal harshly with them, yet it is not too harshly; that which is necessary can not be remitted. Without beating it is impossible to separate the wheat from the chaff. What human hand beats so heavily that it crushes the wheat? Shall that be done by the hand of the Lord? No; He only separates the gold from the slag. He is "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working," so that one at length must give Him the testimony, "All His works are truth; all His ways are judgment," and not only judgment, but they are also "in the sanctuary." One must worship and rejoice. While we do not wish their return, yet we give forever thanks for the ordeals we have gone through. We only lament that we did not sooner appreciate them, and conduct ourselves more quietly while they lasted.

Our souls—on Thee we cast them,
Our only refuge Thou!
Thy cheering words revive us,
When pressed with grief we bow:
Thou bear'st the trusting spirit
Upon Thy loving breast,
And givest all Thy ransomed
A sweet, unending rest.

THURSDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. Heb. 10: 36. In your patience possess ye your souls. Luke 21: 19. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Heb. 12: 1.

"Patience" has been much recommended by the Savior. He has made patience an indispensable condition of salvation. We can not possess our souls and obtain salvation except by patience. Just as earnestly does Paul emphasize the necessity of patience. He declares that we cannot receive the promises of God, not do the will

of God, without patience. He represents it to Timothy as an object he should follow after (1 Tim. 6: 11). He admonishes Titus to tell the aged men that they were to be just as sound in patience as in faith (Tit. 2: 2). He whose patience is ailing, is certainly not sound in faith. Paul says to the Corinthians that our salvation is revealed in that we suffer patiently. He says, "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience" (2 Cor. 1: 6; 6: 4). But patience is especially necessary in the hour when persecution and temptation come upon the believers. Then no power avails; then nothing avails but the patience and the faith of the saints (Rev. 13: 10). This virtue, which above all others is necessary, beautiful, rare, difficult, strong and noble—where do we find it? Where we find all: at the cross of Jesus. He who has learned to dwell with the most patient and holy of cross-bearers, who looks intently into His patient and loving heart, learns and receives of the Lamb the nature of a lamb.

When worn with pain, disease, and grief,
This feeble body see;
Grant patience, rest, and kind relief;
Good Lord, remember me.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Abraham against hope believed in hope — — — being not weak in faith. Rom. 4: 18. 19. In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. Is. 30: 15. Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Ps. 62: 8.

The divine hope, born of a living faith, abides by what it does not see, as if it did see. Hope knows through faith that God calls forth things that are not as if they were. Hope knows that it does not cost God any more to make something out of nothing than to make that which is something into nothing. Hope builds, however, on the promises of God and not on imagination. God keeps His word, most assuredly, and

this Word is the foundation and cornerstone upon which hope rests, and which does not make it ashamed. He who does not hope that which God has promised, makes God a liar, does not trust in Him who is the most trustworthy of all, and is in doubt as to whether Truth itself has not lied. What a terrible thought to doubt whether God is truthful or His Word a lie. Away from your soul with this child of hell! Banish it and do not harbor it one moment longer in your heart; for it is Satan, the same old serpent that said to your mother Eve, Yea, hath God said? (Gen. 3: 1). No, turn quickly away from this wicked doubt; go into your chamber; make your need known to the Lord; pour out your heart before Him; let it become quiet and strong in Him. By waiting quietly before His face your faith and hope will be revived and established, so that you may tread upon the serpent's head, and stand on a rock, quietly waiting for the fulfillment of all that God has promised. Let it outwardly be ever so dark; let it storm as much as it please, it shall yet clear up again.

In midst of dangers, fears and death,
Thy goodness I'll adore;
And praise Thee for Thy mercies past,
And humbly hope for more.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

I bow my knees — — — that he would grant you — — — to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith — — — in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith in him. Eph. 3: 14. 16. 17. 12.

When Christ dwells in the heart, it may freely and confidently draw near to God. He who possesses the Son, has the Father also. But he who drives the Son away from his heart,—how can he come unto the Father? There is no other way leading to Him, saith the Son, than through me. He who will not go that way, does not get through. Oh, why will you not possess Him, ye children of men, notwithstanding you may receive Him so easily? Do not say, Are we to ascend up

to heaven to bring Christ down? Are we to — — — No, nothing, nothing of all that you may say, object, or do. Ye sinners are to return to yourselves, to your own hearts. "The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart" (Rom. 10: 8). He is even now waiting for you there. "The Lord is nigh unto all those who call upon Him in truth." It is unpardonable and indefensible to let Him, *Him*, wait, to turn one's back on Him; to close the heart to Him who has created and redeemed it (Rev. 3: 20). What can make your heart more happy than He if you only surrender it to Him? Oh, bow your knees with St. Paul, that your inner man may be strengthened by His Spirit to receive Christ and by faith to let Him take up His abode in you! Through Christ, heaven is opened to you in life and in death. Through Him you have free access to all the treasures of God. Through Him you become enriched in all things. Through Him all things are bestowed upon you. Oh, that Jesus may not have to say in regard to you also, "How often would I have come and taken up my abode in your heart, and you would not!"

May faith, deep rooted in the soul,
The flesh subdue, the mind control:
May guile depart, and discord cease,
And all within be joy and peace.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him. Jer. 22: 10. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 1 Thes. 4: 14. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness. Is. 57: 2.

That which the Savior said to the weeping daughters of Jerusalem: "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children," every lamented and departed person, who, saved through faith, has stepped across the boundaries of time, may say to those who weep for him.*) For who is more to be bemoaned

* Those who have not died in the Lord, are surely to be lamented and bemoaned.

those who still voyage on the dangerous ocean, tossed about by storm and billows, or those who have already safely reached the haven of eternal rest, the better land? They who have died in the Lord, are to be envied; for they have obtained and received that for which we are still waiting amid dangers. Therefore, a Christian loves to linger in God's acre. The stillness in which the departed brethren rest, raises the mind above the grave and above time to the blessed and quiet eternity where all wars of passion, all unrest that disturbs the peace of God, are at an end. Beloved, do not pass a graveyard without visiting your departed brethren. At their sleeping-chambers give yourself up to the thoughts that crowd upon you. If you feel that you must weep, then weep; yet not for them, but for yourself and your brethren who are still on the pilgrimage. Look with longing for the blessed ones who have reached home. Stretch out your hands for the invisible. Lay hold of the eternal life which hovers above the grave and receive in your heart as much as you can make room for. One sees the dawn of morning on the grave and perceives the air of spring—and that is said to be very healthful.

Asleep in Jesus! peaceful rest,
Whose waking is supremely blest:
No fear, no woe, shall dim that hour
That manifests the Savior's power.

Asleep in Jesus! O, for me
May such a blissful refuge be!
Securely shall my ashes lie,
And wait the summons from on high.

MONDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Arise, O Lord; O God, lift up thine hand: forget not the humble. Ps. 10: 12. **He forgetteth not the cry of the humble.** Ps. 9: 12. **Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me.** Ps. 38: 21. **For the Lord will not cast off his people.** Ps. 94: 14. **For the Lord will not cast off for ever.** Lam. 3: 31.

Answers to these prayers, and promises concerning them are found in plenty in the word of God. Even

if there were no other answers than those found in Is. 49: 15, and in John 6: 37, these would be sufficient to comfort all that are downcast and sad, all that are in fear and doubt. Grasp them in faith and have the confidence in the good God that He does not lie, that He does not mock the afflicted, but inviolably keeps what He has promised in His word. If we only pray thus and continue in these child-like and earnest petitions and remember His fatherly heart, we shall never lack an enswer. What can surpass the faithfulness, tender love and devotion of our Bridegroom? What ought we not expect from Him? Oh, we of little faith! If we were really established in His word, we should stand more firmly than the mountains; we should never be moved. Heaven and earth shall collapse and perish, but His word and faithfulness never collapse and never perish. God has written to you with the blood of His Son, on the cross of Golgotha. Go there. What do you read? When you can neither read nor believe another word, there you shall read and believe the handwriting of God the Father in the wounds and blood of His Son. For more legibly, powerfully, convincingly, and vividly no writer can write nor speaker speak. There it is written in large letters, "I do not forget you; I do not forsake you; I do not cast you off."

Jesus, my Strength, my Hope,
On Thee I cast my care;
With humble confidence look up,
And know Thou hear'st my prayer.
Give me on Thee to wait,
Till I can all things do;
On Thee, almighty to create,
Almighty to renew.

TUESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. Prov. 23: 26. **Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.** 1 Pet. 3: 15. **Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.** Mat. 5: 8. **Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.** Mat. 12: 34.

To give one's heart to God means to preserve one's heart pure from everything which is not God; to cling with one's heart to naught but God and Christ; to have the same will as God; to delight in everything in which God is well pleased, and to shun everything that displeases God. He who is ever filled with God, filled with love to Christ; who in all things is led and constrained by love to Jesus only, who does not ask, What will the world say about it? but who asks, What does my Beloved wish? What does the God of my heart delight in? What is His good pleasure? How am I best to find the will of God? he sanctifies God in his heart. He who does not permit himself the slightest unrighteousness, not even things permissible, though he gain the whole world thereby, because he knows that God, Christ, does not wish it, or is unwilling that it shall be done, has given and sanctified his heart to God: his heart is pure; such a heart sees God. He whose heart is filled with love to God, can not with his lips give utterance to anything which is not of God. The mouth is the betrayer of the heart. But it is also often a deceiver and a liar; for in the hypocrits it can speak of God and of love to Christ, while God and love to Christ are not in the heart. Yet not always. The mouth betrays at times that which dwells in the heart, because the mouth of those who are not on right terms with God in their heart, is changeable and does not always say the same thing.

Lord, in ceaseless contemplation
Fix my thankful heart on Thee,
Till I taste Thy full salvation,
And Thine unveiled glory see.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. John 6: 68. We have also a more sure word of prophecy: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. 2 Pet. 1: 19.

All men who have not God's word or who believe not in the Lord Jesus, are in deepest darkness and blindness, without true consolation in life and death. They are miserable and unhappy even though they do not feel their misery. All who have learned to know Jesus and His living word, know this. They did not know before how miserable they were; but having tasted the blessedness to be found in Jesus, they know it. Precious and invaluable the word of the Lord becomes to us only when the day of awakening and repentance breaks forth, when the Day Star, Christ, the living God, the true Light, arises in our hearts. Then one sees light in His light; everything becomes light and clear, then everything becomes living. But what you have received you must also retain in your hearts, in a living memory so that nothing may again entice you away from Jesus. All kinds of temptations and trials come upon the believers. Yet when they remember Jesus Christ; when they have tasted the powers of the world to come; when they have learned to know the living word of God which has brought the soul from death unto life, from darkness unto light; when they ever seek to preserve this light and life, they can say in every temptation that would draw them away from Christ, as Peter said, "To whom shall we go? We will remain with Thee; for Thou hast the words of eternal life."

When our foes are near us,
Then Thy word doth cheer us,—
Word of consolation,
Message of salvation.

When the storms are o'er us,
And dark clouds before us,
Then its light directeth,
And our way protecteth.

THURSDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul. Ps. 54: 4. I will abide in thy tabernacle

for ever; I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Ps. 61: 4. For thy maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. Is. 54: 5.

God has given Himself to us. "I will be their God; and they shall be my people." Thus He often speaks in His word (Ex. 29: 45; Lev. 26: 12; Ezek. 37: 27). "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness" (Hos. 2: 19. 20). Therefore it is written in Is. 54: 5: "Thy Maker is thy husband," He is thy betrothed, and thy spouse, who has interested Himself in thee as a man interests himself in a forsaken wife, who has given thee such rich gifts and who desires so completely to belong to thee that thou canst plead it and say to Him, Thou art my God. Thou must interest Thyself in me as a bridegroom interests himself in his bride. "I was cast upon Thee from the womb" (Ps. 22: 10). "By Thee I have been holden up from the womb" (Ps. 71: 6). "Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb" (Ps. 139: 13). Thus have they spoken to God who have trusted in Him. So must your faith also speak. God is your God, and all that which is His is yours also. His love has bestowed upon you all that He is. He exists for you as if He were your God alone, almighty, merciful, gracious and omnipresent for you alone. All that He is, and all that He can do, He has promised and sworn to you. You must either deny the existence of God or confess that He is your God, who never can forsake you, and never disown Himself; for He is your Maker and your Husband. He has taken upon Himself and sworn to the obligation, "I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Josh. 1: 5; Deut. 31: 6. 8). We can therefore cheerfully say, "In God have I put my trust: I will not fear what flesh can do unto me" (Ps. 56: 5. 12; Heb. 13: 6).

The bounties of Thy love
Shall crown my following days;
Nor from Thy house will I remove,
Nor cease to speak Thy praise.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Mat. 5: 16. Thou believest that there is one God; thou dost well: the devils also believe, and tremble. Jas. 2: 19. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? Luke 18: 8.

How much "faith" there is in the world; but how little of the light of faith that shines and gives warmth! Faith must be a light from God and heaven to bring light into the darkness around it. Faith must prove its fire by works of righteousness. Faith must prove its power, its origin from God; otherwise it is dead, cold glitter that only deceives and avails nothing, a faith of devils, only a bare admission of the truth. The devil can not deny that God exists; yea, his faith in the existence of God is so firm that he trembles before Him, which is more than some believers do. Therefore the devil can be said to have a better faith than they have. But such a faith makes neither righteous, nor does it save. For if such a trembling faith availed anything, the devil would long ago have been righteous and saved. Here you see how little the apostle James values your faith of hypocrisy and of the mouth; and yet men do not tremble. Even Jesus Himself lamented because of the latter times and makes clearly known that at His coming He will find very little of true faith. Strive therefore, beloved, with all your might to be among the few in whom the Lord shall find faith. I wish for myself and for you the faith of the Romans at the time of Paul, which was "spoken of throughout the whole world" (Rom. 1: 8). Examine your faith according to this; for without true, living and active faith it is impossible to please God.

O may my name, dear Lord, be found
Free from all condemnation,
For Thy death's sake, Thy pains and wounds,
In Thy book of salvation.
I will not doubt:—I trust in Thee;—
From Satan Thou hast made me free,
And from all condemnation.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? 1 Pet. 3: 13. The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. Ps. 27: 1. 5.

David had only one prayer to the Lord (Ps. 27), only one desire, and that was that he might "dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." But David had only an outward sanctuary, the temple which was "made with hands"; and yet he perceived the Lord so powerfully there that he feared nothing—yet he found cover and protection against all his enemies, did not fear either wars or armies that might rise against him and devour him. "They shall stumble," he says, "and fall; for the Lord hides me in His pavilion; in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock, which they cannot scale." He sought, found and enjoyed in the outward sanctuary also the inner sanctuary, in the spirit, and this made him strong and blessed. What David accomplished and possessed, a Christian must much more accomplish and possess. Thou house of the Lord, thou tabernacle of the Lord—art thou no longer to be found? True, the temple which David outwardly visited is long since destroyed; but the sanctuary of which it was a type—the tabernacle of God among men of which it was a prophecy—exists and will continue to exist as long as there are hearts to be found that seek God in spirit and in truth. You can find and visit the Lord Himself and not His tabernacle only. You can ever have Jesus with you and in you. "I am with you alway even unto the end of the world," is a word He has given you, and it is His custom to keep His word. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not His word; consequently, this word shall not pass away. If you can say with David, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek

after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord (inwardly, in the Spirit with Him) all the days of my life, that He may constantly dwell in me, and I in Him, that nothing shall be able to separate us any more; I have laid hold of Him and will not let Him depart"—you may be just as fearless as David. Then you are just as well covered, hidden and protected from all danger as he; then you stand upon a rock where no arm, no power, no disaster, and no storm can reach you.

Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to Thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven wil bring me sweeter rest.
Oh! 'tis not in grief to harm me,
While Thy love is left to me;
Oh! 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with Thee.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Little children, it is the last time. 1 John 2: 18. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Heb. 10: 37. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. 1 Thes. 5: 2

Thus the apostles think and speak of the coming of the Lord. They never considered themselves safe, but watched day and night and kept themselves ever ready to receive Him. If "the last time" commenced over eigtheen hundred years ago, how can much of it be left? Who can count on the fraction of a second? How, according to the admonition in 2 Pet. 3: 11—15, we ought to be diligent in holy conversation and godliness, to wait and long for the coming of the day of God! How earnestly we ought to strive to be found blameless of Him if He were to come to-morrow! The Savior Himself warns us in Luke 21: 34. 36. All this ought in our day to be well considered; for we are nearer to this "day," which will surely come, by eighteen hundred years, than the first Christians who even then

hoped to live that day, and daily prepared themselves for it. Alas! who knows how near the terrible judgments that are to precede that day, may be to us? No one believes it before it falls upon men as a "snare," and as "a thief in the night." Ye children of light, do not sleep! Awake! ye daughters and ye brides of the Lamb, the Bridegroom is at hand; He is at the door. We are not safe a single hour. He may swiftly and suddenly come upon us. Blessed is he who shall then be awake, who together with the bride shall long for His coming and meet Him with the shout, "Come, Lord Jesus!" Examine yourself daily to see if you will be able confidently to cry thus—if you will be able to stand in His presence. He has eyes like flames of fire, eyes that will detect and bring to light all dishonesty and every unfaithfulness, no matter how well hidden in the heart. Do not hesitate in clearing out of your hearts everything that is not pleasing to His eye.

Lord Jesus Christ, do not delay,
O hasten our salvation!
We often tremble on our way,
In fear of tribulation.
Then hear us when we cry to Thee;
Come mighty Judge, come, make us free
From every evil. Amen!

MONDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3: 13. 14. I count all things but loss — — — that I may win Christ and be found in him. Phil. 3: 8. 9.

You seek many things; you strive to obtain everything. Yet, one thing you lack: a prize in which everything is contained. If you do not seek and find this, you will at last possess nothing, because you do not possess that without which everything is nothing. Do you not know that no man, "having put his hand to the plough, and looking back," is fit for the kingdom of God? Forward! Before you lies the prize. Do not

look back for that which lies behind you. "Let everything lie and follow me," Jesus calls to you from above; He urges upon you this one thing. Count everything that is called gain on earth but loss. There is only one gain. Christ gained, all is gained; Christ lost, all is lost. How much still lies in your mind and in your desire! He who presses forward to a given mark, has this mark only before his eye; for as soon as he loses sight of this mark, he runs the risk of getting farther away from the mark instead of getting closer to it, or to get in upon by-ways, or to take steps that are in vain. Ours is a heavenly, a divine calling, and therefore our mind, our effort, our whole existence and activity, ought also to be directed to heaven, to God, to Christ. Away, world! away, sin! away, honor and licentiousness! away, everything, from my mind and heart! Christ, be Thou alone my mark, my prize, for which I strive until I possess Thee wholly, and am wholly found in Thee.

We wait for Thee; here Thou hast won
Our hearts to hope and duty;
But while our spirits feel Thee near,
Our eyes would see Thy beauty;
We fain would be at rest with Thee
In peace and joy supernal,
In glorious life eternal.

TUESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; — — — but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. Jer. 9: 23. 24. Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Ps. 103: 1.

Men as a rule use all that is in them for their own service. They use all the faculties and powers of body and soul for their own good, for their self-preservation and advancement, for their own pleasure, glory, and interest; they think that they can do nothing better. They are under the law of their members, the law of selfishness, and they keep strictly the command-

ment: Thou shalt love thyself with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind. If this commandment were God's commandment, the world would be full of excellent saints and perfect Christians. But it is not God's commandment. The commandment of God strikes at this self-exaltation, and at this self-worship and says, He who does not hate himself and love the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his strength, is not a disciple of Christ. When the wise, intelligent and learned man glories in his wisdom, makes use of it for his own glory, and for his own gain only, he insults God and makes himself a god. When he who is strong and mighty glories in his might or, which is the same, uses it for himself only, he opposes God, drives Him from the throne in his heart, and places himself there. When he who is rich glories in his wealth, uses it for himself only, and regards all that he has as his own possession, and not as something which is entrusted to his stewardship, and for which he is to give an account to God, then he is his own god, and will at last receive the reward of mammon: he will perish together with his idols. He who would glory without becoming vain in his glory, let him glory in that he knows God, that he himself is nothing, and that God is all; that he only exists for God and by God. Let everything within you and upon you praise the Lord; let all that is within you seek to glorify the Lord only, of whom, by whom, and to whom all things are.

O bless the Lord, my soul!
Let all within me join,
And aid my tongue to bless His name,
Whose favors are divine.

WEDNESDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

He that dwelleth in the secret places of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Ps. 91: 1. 2. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him. Ps. 2: 12. For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Ps. 86: 5.

The Lord is "a cover" and "a shield," "a shadow" in the heat of tribulation. He relieves us from our weariness, and strengthens us when we seek refuge in His shadow. The fear of the human heart is the source of all afflictions. Unbelief is the mother of all anxiety and terror in afflictions. He who has God as his friend; who believes in His protecting hand, which day and night is stretched forth to cover us, and without which not a hair of our head can be harmed; who in faith grasps this hand—what shall he fear? We seek protection in men; yet they cannot protect us; by their protection they will lessen our confidence in the protection of the Lord; at last they will leave us to our own devices. Therefore Jeremiah expresses himself so strongly (Chap. 17: 5), saying, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and (mark it!) whose heart departeth from the Lord." He who thus explicitly trusts in the help of man and does not expect anything from God, does not believe that God helps through men, is cursed and shall not see when good cometh but be like a lonely tree in the desert. But "blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is." He shall be as a tree planted by the waters: it spreadeth out its roots by the river, and shall not wither when heat cometh, but its leaf shall be green. Yea, truly, the confidence in the Lord is a tree which is always green, a tree that bears fruit in every season of the year, the fruitfulness of which no heat nor cold can destroy; that defies all storms and dangers and remains when everything else perishes.

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eye-lids close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me!
Let me hide myself in Thee.

THURSDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel — — — which thou redeemedst to thee? 2 Sam. 7: 23. And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous? Deut. 4: 8. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Ps. 147: 20.

Thus the Israelites praised themselves more fortunate than all the other people on earth. They were the most fortunate also, at least all the true children of Israel; for they possessed divine privileges and had their God as close as they could have Him, according to God's dispensation in the old covenant. But soon it was said, "The people which shall be created shall praise the Lord" (Ps. 102: 19). "I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved" (Hos. 2: 23; Rom. 9: 24), that is, I will cast off the Jewish people and gather unto me a people from among the Gentiles. And concerning this people it is said, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Cor. 6: 16). "Thy people also shall be all righteous" (Is. 60: 21). After He had gathered this new people it was said, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Pet. 2: 9. 10). With the glory of this new covenant, or of Christianity, nothing else can be compared. Only let us walk in it, as is becoming, and really taste the grace and the blessedness which a child of God may possess! May this be your care and endeavor! Do not glory in what you are not nor in what you do not possess. One appropriates to himself so easily the beautiful, glorious words one reads in the Bible and thereupon forgets to seek to come into possession of the thing itself. Blessed, glorious, and great,

is he who is a true Christian, who really possesses and enjoys that which is promised to the Christian.

Glorious things of Thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God;
He whose Word can not be broken,
Form'd thee for His own abode.
On the Rock of Ages foundered,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

FRIDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Ps. 139: 23. 24. Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Ps. 25: 4. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart. Ps. 26: 2.

There is no deception we poor human beings are more subject to than self-deception. Alas! we deceive ourselves often in the most important matter of our salvation. The psalmist felt this deeply; otherwise the 139th psalm would hardly have been written. In this psalm we find the best guidance to self-examination. We seem to have the best intentions in regard to ourselves; yet it is much wiser to seek the counsel of God and pray Him to "prove" our intention and to investigate how in reality we mean it Yea, he who earnestly desires his own salvation and is loth at last to see himself deceived by his own heart, should often present himself before the all-seeing eye of God and pray, O Lord, Thou knowest me better than I know myself; Thou knowest what dwells in my heart; Thou lookest into the inner recesses of my heart into which my prejudiced eye does not penetrate: reveal unto me all that which is not pleasing to Thee! One can not conceive of anything so terrible as a man deceiving himself; and yet it happens so often. Consider once in real earnestness what you do. Do not rely on yourself. Lay your heart open before God with earnest and ardent prayer that He may interest Him-

self in you, disclose all which is false and deceptive in you, all by-considerations and all deceptive manners, and that He may lead you in the way of truth and purity. No godly person must think himself excused from doing this; for no one is free from deception unless he, through watchfulness and prayer, is made free therefrom by the Lord.

Grant us, dear Lord, from evil ways
True absolution and release;
And bless us more than in past days
With purity and inward peace.

SATURDAY AFTER THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. Ps. 118: 15. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. Mat. 12: 20.

You have the enemy within; you are your own worst enemy; for in reality the enemy is unable to harm your soul, if you do not want him to do so, if you do not go over to him. Within you have also the Victor and Conqueror over all your enemies, who always takes your part when you take His part and keep to Him. Even though you have but a little strength, He has strength so much the greater. He strikes everything to the ground. If you are weak, He is sufficiently strong to overcome all things. "I am in them," He says. Who would think of overcoming those in whom He dwells? "Through Him we are more than conquerors," says Paul (Rom. 8: 37). It makes no difference to Him whether He fight with many or with few, in one who is weak or in one who is strong. He can give victory without any multitude of forces. If your strength be only a little strength, only as "smoking flax," only as "a bruised reed," He shall yet turn your judgment to victory, and remain victorious in you if you only abide in Him and trust in Him. Only let the gates and the doors of your heart lift up their "heads," that the King of glory may enter in. "Who is this King of

glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Ps. 24: 7. 8). Without Him you must not enter into combat with any enemy. But through Him we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall "tread down our enemies" (Ps. 108: 13). His right hand does powerful works; when we place ourselves, body and soul, in His right hand, then shall we sing with joyful voice of victory in the tabernacles of the righteous.

The word they still shall let remain—
No thanks shall they have for it.
He's by our side upon the plain,
With His good gifts and Spirit,
Take they then our life,
Goods, fame, child and wife.
When their worst is done,
They yet have nothing won,
The kingdom ours remaineth.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 1 Tim. 6: 11. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. 1: 13.

Thus the apostle impresses the faith in which there is power, not only the faith of the head and lips; he would have the fruits of faith vividly demonstrated in man's conduct, warning against such as have lost their faith through covetousness. No vicious person nor servant of sin can, in reality, believe. Faith precludes sin, and sin precludes faith. Faith and sin are as opposed to each other as spirit and flesh; fire and water; light and darkness. A painted fire can easily agree with darkness; a painted faith can dwell harmoniously together with all the passions in a sinful heart and mind. But the true and living faith is full of power and love, full of righteousness and godliness, full of meekness and longsuffering; it expels everything which is opposed to it; and it works that which is conducive to faith. Therefore, O man of God, glory in Jesus

Christ, and in His righteousness, but read what kind of faith St. Paul preached and see if this faith is yours also.

The Gospel shows the Father's grace,
Who sent His Son to save our race:
Proclaims how Jesus lived and died
That man might thus be justified.

May we in faith its tidings learn,
Nor thanklessly its blessings spurn;
May we in faith its truth confess,
And praise the Lord our righteousness.

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